

THE ARCHAEOLOGIST'S BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

The problem in
archaeology is when
to stop laughing.

Glyn Daniel

K. Kris Hirst

Love is fleeting

Stone tools are forever

Archaeologists on Dead Pasts

Steven Faulkner once wrote, "The past is not dead; it is not
William Faulkner once wrote, "The past is not dead; it is not
even past." This is true, though occasionally the past needs
a little mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to get the old boy
wheezing again. A subset of archaeology knowledge, the
much talk of the past has many curi
And issues, describing Read
Cicero
To be ignorant of what occurred
before you were born is to
remain ignorant of the

Edward F. Neill

Guide A. Lafferty

ROUTLEDGE

THE ARCHAEOLOGIST'S BOOK OF QUOTATIONS



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K. Kris Hirst

Editor

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INTRODUCTION



This collection of quotations about archaeology is the result of years of both desultory and directed hunting and gathering as a student, archaeologist and most recently, writer/editor/webster of the Archaeology section of About.com.

How I Got Here

I became an archaeologist after a decade during which I considered myself a writer and fed myself with my typing and editing skills. It seemed like a good idea at the time to find something to write about: archaeology turned out to be my drug of choice, but I got distracted by the joy of fieldwork. And after twenty years of chasing around the world with a trowel in my back pocket (hard on the blue-jeans, I find), I now consider myself a writer and, well, let's not go into the economics of that decision.

As a raving generalist, along the way I've devoured academic literature from a broad menu of subjects in archaeology, and munched on a lot of fiction and a lot of other things that really don't qualify as either one. Somehow, from even the most technical and dull of academic papers, or the most unrelated biography or novel or movie, many an eloquent or funny quotation has leapt into my arms, demanding attention and mixing up my fancy metaphors. Some of the quotes attempt to pin

down elements of the elusive field that archaeologists have chosen to pursue; others are simply humorous reflections on what the love of the past does to all of us.

I can't really say when I started collecting quotations related to archaeology, but I blame it all on Kent Flannery. He was certainly the first archaeologist who made me laugh out loud, type out the quotation and tack it to my graduate student office door (oops, no tacks allowed, who knew?). One of the first things I did in 1997 when I began working on my website for About.com (then the Mining Company) was begin a quote collection. Quote Number 1? Kent Flannery: "Archaeology is the only branch of anthropology where we kill our informants in the process of studying them."

Sources for the Quotations

So the primary sources for this collection are academic papers and books in archaeology over the past century or so, books and novels over the past three centuries, movies and comic strips and music and other pop culture of the present and, er, past. Some of the most surprising people say things that are pertinent to archaeology and the study of the past. You would almost think it was a popular obsession for centuries of human beings.

My secondary source is from fellow archaeologists and fans of archaeology who were willing to pony up their favorite quotations. For this most recent collection, I am indebted to Janice Adamson, Richard Affleck, Gwyn Alcock, Paul W. Alford, Tony Baker, Mary C. Beaudry, Stephanie Bergman, J. Howard Beverly, Jane L. Brown, Lyle Browning, Geoff Carver, Cerridwen

Connelly, Frank L. Cowan, Leon Cranmer, Richard L. Currit, John Dockall, Keith Doms, Harrison Eiteljorg III, Charles R. Ewen, John M. Foster, Anne Giesecke, Marlesa Gray, R. S. Greenwood, Andy Hemmings, A. Gwynn Henderson, Nigel J. Hetherington, Barbara J. Hickman, Marilyn Heite, Julie Hollowell, Jack Hunter, Silas Hurry, Meta F. Janowitz, Ben Jeffs, Lucy D. Jones, Robert Keeler, T. Arron Kotlensky, Michael Lenardi, Bradley T. Lepper, Jan and Paul Lorrain, Ron May, Jeanette McKenna, Tom Mohr, Gaye Nayton, Carol A. Nickolai, Emilia Oddo, Ralph K. Pedersen, Bruce Penner, Michael R. "Smoke" Pfeiffer, Harding Polk II, Mike Polk, David Rice, Michael F. Rondeau, Jim Rudolph, Bryant Saner, Robert L. Schuyler, Carol Serr, Andrew R. Sewell, Bob Skiles, Calvin B. Smith, R. Angus Smith, Nichole Sorensen-Mutchie, Carl Steen, Karl Steinen, Robert Stuckenrath, Michelle Touton, Susan Walter, Nancy White, and Michael Yarborough.

What's in Here

The book is arranged in six chapters. The first chapter, *Doing Archaeology*, has three sub-subjects. "Defining Archaeology" includes the many ways we define archaeology—I was astounded at how many ways we do that, and discovered that there is beauty in mosaics. "The Pleasures of Fieldwork" describes how we feel about excavating and why we despise it or long for it or, you know, really, both; and "Diggers and Denizens" are quotes about archaeologists, how we're perceived and how we live.

Chapter 2, Lessons Learned, includes “Why Study the Past?”, “History’s Pitfalls” and “What Have We Learned?”, all of which are shades of quotations about how the past engages us and how it terrifies us at the same time. Lessons Learned also includes answers to that old question “Is Archaeology a Science?”, and if you aren’t confused after reading all those answers, this book hasn’t done its job.

Chapter 3, Art and Literature, I threw in for a lark. As an ex-English major I love poetry and several nineteenth century poets like Byron and Poe and Shelley were really lit up by ruins and what they say about the transitory nature of human endeavor (also spelled endeavour). Somehow, ruins don’t seem to light people up in the same way in the twenty-first century. Also in this chapter you’ll find some words of wisdom from ancient texts.

Chapter 4, the Pop Culture Divide, examines two sides of popular culture in archaeology. In “Archaeology for the Public,” you’ll find what we as archaeologists think about whether we should and how we should make our data available to the public. “Pop Culture Strikes Back” is a collection of quotes from pop culture sources about what the general public make of us. I think that’s fair, don’t you?

Chapter 5, Ethics and the Archaeologist, takes a serious tack, with quotes that define and describe the several ethical dilemmas that archaeologists face in our world. “Ethical Dilemmas” embraces how women, minorities and indigenous folks are addressed in archaeology. In “Religion vs. Science,” you’ll find quotes about how to communicate science if the world rejects

it. In “Who Owns the Past?” are answers to that oh-so-frequently asked question.

Finally, Chapter 6, cunningly named Deeper Excavations, contains a selection of thoughtful quotes about the larger issues. “Cosmic Reflections” touches on our role in the greater scheme of things; yes, some people actually think we have one of those. “Constructing the Past” includes quotes that recognize what odd pieces are in the weird jigsaw we create. “Reconciling Past, Present and Future” speaks to the way we use the past to inform the present and predict what might occur in the future.

And finally, “Seeking Truth” resounds with quotes of people who have been putting those pieces together and disclaiming about why that jigsaw ultimately matters.

Who is this Book for?

There are several reasonable reasons why anybody could use this book. It’s a slice of what archaeologists have been thinking about their craft for the past couple hundred years, and a tiny taste of the thoughtful papers that have been written. Each quotation has as complete a source as I could find, because in archaeology, after all, context is everything.

I firmly believe that I began collecting quotes because I suffer from what the French call *l’esprit d’escalier* (spirit of the staircase). I can never find the right words to retort in an argument until I am on the exit staircase long after the argument is over. You’ll find a few excellent retorts in here.

But I also think this book is for reflection. Sometimes a good quote takes a while to sink in. Or as Lewis Binford confessed once, "I write so that people have got to read and reread it so that maybe they have got the meaning."

And I also have always liked having an appropriate chapter heading with a pithy quote included—there's a precise word for that, but it eludes me—or inset into the margins, when I'm reading an academic paper. Please, use it this way as well. So, this book is for anyone who writes student papers or research publications or PowerPoint presentations or conference proceedings but, most of all, for people who just like to stick things up on their graduate students' doors.

1: DOING ARCHAEOLOGY

Have Trowel, Will Travel

Defining Archaeology

Archaeology has been a scientific study for some three hundred years, and you'd think by now we'd have our definitions down. But archaeology seems to evade precise definition, becoming part history, part science, part art, and part anthropology as the scholar knits up the pattern of the weave. Of course, that never stopped anyone from trying to define it.

Bruce G. Trigger

Archaeology is the only discipline that seeks to study human behavior and thought without having any direct contact with either.

Source: Bruce G. Trigger. 1991. Archaeology and epistemology: Dialoguing across the Darwinian chasm. *American Journal of Archaeology* 102:1-34.

R. A. Lafferty

"Archaeology is made up entirely of anomalies," said Terrence, "rearranged to make them fit in a fluky pattern. There'd be no system to it otherwise."

Source: R. A. Lafferty. 1970. Continued on Next Rock. In *Orbit 7*, edited by Damon Knight. Harper and Row, New York (distributed by G.P. Putnam).

The Archaeologist's Book of Quotations

Ronald Wright

Archaeology is perhaps the best tool we have for looking ahead, because it provides a deep reading of the direction and momentum of our course through time: what we are, what we have come from, and therefore where we are most likely to be going.

Source: Ronald Wright. 2005. *A Short History Of Progress*. House of Anansi Press, Toronto, Ontario.

David Clarke

Archaeology is what archaeologists do.

Source: David Clarke. 1979. "The Loss of Innocence". *The Analytical Archaeologist: Collected Papers of David L. Clarke*. Academic Press.

Sellar and Yeatman

History is not what you thought. It is what you remember. All other history defeats itself.

Source: W. C. Sellar and R. J. Yeatman. 1930 Preface, *1066 and All That*. Clarke Academic Press, Boston.

James Joyce

History, Stephen said, is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.

Source: James Joyce. *Ulysses*. 1922(1988). Oxford University Press, Oxford, England.

Grahame Clark

[Archaeology is] a subject which seeks to discover how we became human beings endowed with minds and souls before we had learned to write.

Source: Grahame Clark. 1993. *A Path to Prehistory*. Cited in Brian Fagan's *Grahame Clark: An Intellectual Biography of an Archaeologist*. 2001. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado.

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David Clarke

[Archaeology is] the discipline with the theory and practice for the recovery of unobservable hominid behavior patterns from indirect traces in bad samples.

Source: David Clarke. 1973. The Loss of Innocence. *Antiquity* 47:100.

Tom King

Archaeology is like life: if you're going to accomplish anything you have to learn to live with regret, learn from mistakes, and get on with it.

Source: Tom King. 2005. *Doing Archaeology*. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, California.

Larry Zimmerman

Archaeology is the scientific study of peoples of the past... their culture and their relationship with their environment. The purpose of archaeology is to understand how humans in the past interacted with their environment, and to preserve this history for present and future learning.

Source: Larry J. Zimmerman 1995. <http://www.usd.edu/anth/midarch/arch.htm>. Downloaded February 3, 2009.

Society for Historical Archaeology

Historical archaeology is more than just a treasure hunt. It is a challenging search for clues to the people, events, and places of the past.

Source: Society for Historical Archaeology <http://www.sha.org/> (only it's not there any more).

State Historical Society of South Dakota

Archaeology is our way of reading that message and understanding how these peoples lived. Archaeologists take the clues left behind by the people of the past, and, like detectives, work to reconstruct how long ago they lived, what they ate, what their tools and homes were like, and what became of them.

Source: State Historical Society of South Dakota <http://www.sdsmt.edu/wwwsarc/arch-outline.html> 2000. Downloaded February 3, 2009.

Alabama Archaeology

Archaeology is the scientific study of past cultures and the way people lived based on the things they left behind.

Source: Alabama Archaeology <http://bama.ua.edu/~alaarch/Whatisarchaeology/> Downloaded February 3, 2009.

Harry Reginald Hall

Archaeological "science" is merely a branch of knowledge which is now sufficiently advanced to be able to frame more or less probable hypotheses with regard to the remains of the handiwork of ancient peoples which its expert excavators and explorers have discovered. Absolute certainty is only possible where a continuous literary tradition has always existed.

Source Harry Reginald Hall. 1901. *The Oldest Civilization of Greece: Studies of the Mycenaean Age*. D. Nutt publishers, London.

Paul Bahn

[Archaeology is] a vast fiendish jigsaw puzzle invented by the devil as an instrument of tantalizing torture.

Source: Paul Bahn. 1989 *Bluff your way through archaeology*. Egmont House: London.

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Kent Flannery

Archeology is the only branch of anthropology where we kill our informants in the process of studying them.

Source: Kent V. Flannery 1982. "The golden Marshalltown." *American Anthropologist* 84:275.

John C. McEnroe

Archaeology is not simply the finite body of artefactual evidence uncovered in excavations. Rather, archaeology is what archaeologists say about that evidence. It is the ongoing process of discussing the past which is, in itself, an ongoing process. Only recently have we begun to realise the complexity of that discourse. ... [T]he discipline of archaeology is a site of disputation—a dynamic, fluid, multidimensional engagement of voices bearing upon both past and present.

Source: John C. McEnroe. 2002. Cretan Questions: Politics and archaeology 1898-1913. In *Labyrinth Revisited: Rethinking 'Minoan' Archaeology*, Yannis Hamilakis, editor. Oxbow Books, Oxford.

David Hurst-Thomas

[Archaeology] is not what you find, it's what you find out.

Source: David Hurst-Thomas. 1989. *Archaeology*. 2nd edition. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York.

Lynn Meskell

An aware, responsible and engaged global archaeology might be a relevant, positive force which recognizes and celebrates difference, diversity and real multivocality. Under common skies and before divided horizons, exposure to global difference and alterity prompts us all to seek responses and responsibility.

The Archaeologist's Book of Quotations

Source: Lynn Meskell. 1998. Introduction: Archaeology matters. In *Archaeology Under Fire*. Lynn Meskell (ed.), Routledge Press, London.

C. Leonard Woolley

Field Archaeology is the application of scientific method to the excavation of ancient objects, and it is based on the theory that the historical value of an object depends not so much on the nature of the object itself as on its associations, which only scientific excavation can detect... digging consists very largely in observation, recording and interpretation.

...Archaeology...deals with a period limited to a few thousand years and its subject is not the universe, not even the human race, but modern man.

Source: C. Leonard Woolley, 1961. *Digging up the Past*. Penguin, Harmondsworth, United Kingdom.

Camille Paglia

Archaeology is our voyage to the past, where we discover who we were and therefore who we are.

Source: Camille Paglia. September 30, 1999. "Mummy Dearest: Archaeology is Unfairly Maligned by Trendy Academics." *Wall Street Journal*.

Philip Phillips

New World archaeology is anthropology or it is nothing.

Source: Philip Phillips. 1958. American archaeology and general anthropological theory. *Southwestern Journal of Archaeology* 11:246-250.

O.G.S. Crawford

Archaeology is that branch of science which is concerned with past phases of human culture; in practice

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it is concerned more, but not exclusively, with early and prehistoric phases than with those illustrated by written documents.

O.G.S. Crawford, 1960. *Archaeology in the Field*. Phoenix House, London.

Kathleen Kenyon

[Archaeology] is the method of finding out about the past of the human race in its material aspects, and the study of the products of this past.

Kathleen Kenyon, 1956. *Beginning in Archaeology*. Phoenix House, London.

William Flinders Petrie

Archaeology – the knowledge of how man has acquired his present position and powers – is one of the widest studies, best fitted to open the mind, and to produce that type of wide interests and toleration which is the highest result of education.

Source: William Flinders Petrie, 1904 *Methods and Aims in Archaeology*. Macmillan and Company, London.

R.E. Mortimer Wheeler

If there be a connecting theme in the following pages, it is this: an insistence that the archaeologist is digging up, not things, but people.

Source: R.E. Mortimer Wheeler, 1954. *Archaeology from the Earth*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

David Clarke

Archaeology is, after all, one discipline.

Source: David Clarke, 1973 *Archaeology: the loss of innocence*. *Antiquity* 47:6-18.

Peter L. Drewett

Field archaeology is, not surprisingly, what archaeologists do in the field. However, it also has a considerable pre-field element and an even more considerable post-field element. Sometimes the term 'field archaeology' is used only to refer to techniques, other than excavation, used by archaeologists in the field. 'Field archaeology' used in this way refers essentially to the battery of non-destructive field techniques used to locate areas of archaeological interest (sites).

Source: Peter L. Drewett, 1999. *Field Archaeology: An Introduction*. UCL Press, London.

Glyn E. Daniel

The Greeks and Romans, though they were interested in the early development of man and in the status of their barbarian neighbours, did not develop the necessary prerequisites for writing prehistory, namely the collection, excavation, classification, description and analysis of the material remains of the human past.

Source: Glyn E. Daniel, 1975. *A Hundred and Fifty Years of Archaeology*. 2nd edition. Duckworth, London.

T. J. Pettigrew

[Archaeology consists of] researches tending to illustrate the monuments and remains of antiquity. ...To make cumbrous collections of numberless particulars, merely because they are fragments, and to admire them merely as they are antique, is not the spirit of ancient learning, but the mere doating of superannuation. It is not the true religious study of antiquities, but a devotion for relics; it may make us enthusiasts, fanatic triflers, or

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dupes, but can never administer real or sober knowledge to our understanding. ...The study of antiquities is almost unlimited in its subject, and demands, for perfect elucidation, the aid of history, science, arts, and letters.

Source: T. J. Pettigrew, 1848. Introductory address. *Transactions of the British Archaeological Association* 1-15.

The Pleasures of Fieldwork



Archaeologists have a love-hate relationship with fieldwork: it can be terrifying, exhilarating, thunderously boring, ethically ambiguous, and most compellingly, all of that in the same ten minute stretch.

François Bordes on Sacred Work

Excavating must go on, since it is the only way really to learn. But it is sacred work that should not be taken lightly. We are disturbing the dead, sometimes violating sepulchers, and our only excuse is this hunger to know what separates man from the animals.

Source: François Bordes 1972. *A Tale of Two Caves*. Harper and Row, New York.

Philip Barker on Archaeology and Surgery

Excavation is only a method of producing evidence about the past, a means to an end, akin to surgery in that it is drastic, unlike surgery in that it is always destructive.

Source: Philip Barker. 1993 (3rd. ed.) *Techniques of Archaeological Excavation*. Taylor and Francis Group, London.

J.P. Droop on Surgery and Archaeology

Excavation, like surgery, is an art, but unlike the surgeon, the excavator has no unlimited supply of new subjects ready to benefit by his growing skills. The number of sites that have been spoiled will not bear thinking of, sites that bring a vicarious remorse to the mind that remembers by what ignorance they were very lovingly but very shamefully mishandled, so that their secrets, instead of being gathered up, were spilled and lost.

Source: John Percival Droop. 1915. *Archaeological Excavation*. University Press, Cambridge, England.

Leonard Woolley on the Great Game

When digging ceases to be a great game and becomes, as in Egypt, merely business, it will be a bad thing.

Source: Leonard Woolley 1963. *Excavations at Ur: A record of 12 year's work*. E. Benn, London.

Adrian Praetzellis on Too Much Fun

Most people enjoy the process of fieldwork more than just about anything else. It's the perfect combination of physical activity and mental work—problem solving. Not to mention the great company. How many other fields let you engage emotionally, intellectually, and physically with their subject matter on so many levels? ... Ostensibly, we're out there to find things and record things so we can come to conclusions. But is that what archaeologists enjoy most about their job? Is that what keeps bringing them back? I don't believe it... Field archaeology is just too much fun.

Source: Adrian Praetzellis. 2003. *Dug to Death*. AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek, California.

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R.E. Mortimer Wheeler on Method

We are concerned here with methodical digging for systematic information, not with the upturning of earth in a hunt for the bones of saints and giants or the armoury of heroes, or just plainly for treasure.

Source: R.E. Mortimer Wheeler, 1954. *Archaeology from the Earth*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Julie King (attributed) on Finishing Up

Archaeology means never having to say you're finished.

Attributed to Julie King.

Kent Flannery for the Fun of It

After our talk this afternoon [said the Old Timer], I got to wondering about what archeology needed the most. I decided there probably isn't an urgent need for one more young person who makes a living editing other people's original ideas. And I decided we probably didn't need a lot more of our archeological flat tires recapped as philosophers. There seems to be enough around to handle the available work.

What I don't see enough of, son, is first-rate archaeology.

Now that's sad, because after all, archeology is fun. Hell, I don't break the soil periodically to 'reaffirm my status'. I do it because archeology is still the most fun you can have with your pants on.

Source: Kent V. Flannery. 1982. The golden Marshalltown. *American Anthropologist* 84:265-278.

Edward F. "Ned" Heite on Dirty Truths

We ask questions of the dirt. I don't trust people. I trust the dirt. The dirt is always truthful.

Source: Edward F. "Ned" Heite.

James Michener on Strangest Things

Many digs in the Near East have come to grief because God made little-girl archaeologists and little-boy archaeologists, and when you put them together in tents at the edge of a desert... the strangest things can happen.

Source: James A. Michener, 1965. *The Source*. Random House, New York.

Ivor Noel Hume on High Heels and a Low Décolletage

I realize that we live in a time when discrimination can land you in jail, but I must risk it and say that you stand a better chance by taking on an inexperienced male volunteer than a female... One lady volunteer improperly dressed for the occasion can cause havoc throughout the crew as well as damaging the ground on which she walks. High heels and a low décolletage are a lethal combination.

Ivor Noel Hume. 1969. *Historical Archaeology*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

Khufu on Sticking to a Budget

No job worth doing was ever done on time or under budget.

Source: Anonymous joke, attributed to Khufu.

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Carmel Schrire on Why She Became an Archaeologist

I became an archaeologist because I wanted to drive around in a big Landrover, smoking, cursing, and finding treasure.

Source: Carmel Schrire. 1996. *Digging through Darkness: Chronicles of an Archaeologist*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville.

Terry Pratchett on Future Ruins

It might look a bit messy now, but just you come back in 500 years time.

Source: Bergholt Stuttley Johnson, (Terry Pratchett) 1996. *Men at Arms: A novel of Discworld*. HarperPrism, New York.

Anonymous on Beginnings

An archaeologist starts at the top and works down.

Source: Anonymous.

Diggers and Denizens



The way archaeologists are perceived—and the way we perceive ourselves—is a study in and of itself.

Loren Eiseley on Melancholy Secrets

No one, I suppose, would believe that an archaeologist is a man who knows where last year's lace valentines have gone, or that from the surface of rubbish heaps the thin and ghostly essence of things human keeps rising

through the centuries until the plaintive murmur of dead men and women may take precedence at times over the living voice.

A man who has once looked with the archaeological eye will never see quite normally. He will be wounded by what other men call trifles. It is possible to refine the sense of time until an old shoe in the bunch grass or a pile of 19th century bottles in an abandoned mining town tolls in one's head like a hall clock. This is a price one pays for learning to read time from surfaces other than the illustrated dial. It is the melancholy secret of the artifact, the humanly touched thing.

Source: Loren Eiseley. 1971. *The Night Country*. Scribner, New York.

Oscar Wilde on Touching the Dry Dust

Archaeology to them was not a mere science for the antiquarian; it was a means by which they could touch the dry dust of antiquity into the very breath and beauty of life, and fill with the new wine of romanticism forms that else had been old and outworn.

Source: Oscar Wilde, 1891 (1913 edition). "The Truth of Masks". *Intentions*. Methuen and Company, London.

Bob Skiles on Shameless Inventions

Archaeologists are the most esoteric of the esoteric. We not only answer questions no one ever cared to ask; we shamelessly invent questions for our answers. Then we publish all in a jargon so obscure that only the initiated can understand.

Source: Bob Skiles, 1977.

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Warren DeBoer on Assorted Cranks and Dilettantes

Cahokia archaeology [is] a field that resembles a battleground in which contentious bands of minimalists, maximalists, localists, globalists, dirt-based fieldworkers, university-based theorists, and assorted cranks and dilettantes sweat, spar, and plot.

Source: Warren R. DeBoer. 2003. News under the sun. *Reviews in Anthropology* 32:1-12.

Garry Wheeler Stone on Plow Zones

The plow zone is the mist which separates us from the Seventeenth Century.

Source: Attributed to Garry Wheeler Stone.

Anonymous Field Hand to Garry Wheeler Stone

Garry, throw some fog in the sifter.

Source: Attributed to anonymous field technician working with Garry Wheeler Stone.

László Görög on Public Relations

Archaeologists are underpaid publicity agents for deceased royalty.

Source: *The Mole People*, 1956, screenplay by László Görög.

William Penn on Living with Moderns

Some are so very studious of learning what was done by the ancients that they know not how to live with the moderns.

Source: Attributed to the Quaker minister and American founder William Penn. 1644-1718.

Philip Sidney on Why Poets are Better than Historians

The historian, laden with old mouse-eaten records, authorizing himself (for the most part) upon other histories, whose greatest authorities are built upon the notable foundation of hearsay; having much ado to accord differing writers and to pick truth out of partiality; better acquainted with a thousand years ago than with the present age, and yet better knowing how this world goeth than how his own wit runneth; curious for antiquities and inquisitive of novelties; a wonder to young folks and a tyrant in table talk; denieth, in a great chafe, that any man for teaching of virtue, and virtuous actions, is comparable to him.

Philip Sidney. 1595. An apology for poetry.

Simon Schama on Doomed Historians

Historians are left forever chasing shadows, painfully aware of their inability ever to reconstruct a dead world in its completeness however thorough or revealing their documentation. We are doomed to be forever hailing someone who has just gone around the corner and out of earshot.

Source: Simon Schama. 1991. "Afterword," *Dead Certainties: Unwarranted Speculations*. Granta, London.

Max Mallowan on Ideal Husbands

An archaeologist is the best husband any woman can have; the older she gets, the more interested he is in her.

Source: Max Mallowan. 1954. *News Report*. (Mallowan attributed the quote to his wife, mystery writer Agatha Christie, who later denied having said it.)

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James Whitley on Fishy Advances

Current archaeological theorists are like a shoal of fish, following twisting currents, as one turns they all turn, usually nowhere in particular.

Source: James Whitley. 1999. Quoted in Caroline Malone, Simon Stoddart and Nicholas James, "Editorial", *Antiquity* 73(282):459-460.

Alexander McCall Smith (as Domenica Macdonald) on the Soft Life of Some Anthropologists

Very few anthropologists opt for the soft life when it comes to their field work. In fact, I know only two—one went to the Vatican to study the domestic economy of a male-dominated society, and the other went to Monaco to study sense of place and permanence amongst tax exiles. Both of these were rather condescended to by their peers later on—they were treated as if they had not really earned their spurs, so to speak, as anthropologists. There were sniffy remarks about doing one's research in a meadow rather than a field—that sort of thing. Not really funny, but very barbed.

Source: Domenica Macdonald (Alexander McCall Smith). 2006. *Love over Scotland*. Anchor Books, New York.

Sinclair Lewis on Being an Authentic Scientist

He had never dined with a duchess, never received a prize, never been interviewed, never produced anything which the public could understand, nor experienced anything since his schoolboy amours which nice people could regard as romantic.

He was, in fact, an authentic scientist.

Source: Sinclair Lewis. 1924. *Arrowsmith*. Harcourt Brace, New York.

Tom King on Making the Best of It

Many of us got into archaeology because we found it easier to get along with the dead than the living, but if we're going to practice CRM, we simply have to rearrange our preferences as best we can.

Source: Tom King. 2005. *Doing Archaeology*. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, California.

Tea Leoni on Being an Anthropologist

I sort of thought I wanted to be an anthropologist. But my father suggested I go to a cocktail party full of anthropologists first. I did. He's a very wise man.

Source: Actress Tea Leoni. 1997. *San Jose Mercury News*, December 1997.

Alexander McCall Smith (as Professor Dr Moritz-Maria von Igelfeld) on the Superiority of German Archaeologists

People were used to the Germans discovering all sorts of things; most of Mycenaean civilisation had been unearthed by Schliemann and other German scholars in the nineteenth century, and the only reason why the British discovered the Minoans was because they more or less tripped up and fell into a hole, which happened to be filled with elaborate grave goods. There was not much credit in that, at least in von Igelfeld's view. The same could be said of Egyptology, although in that case one had to admit that there had been a minor British contribution, bumbling and amateurish though it was.

Those eccentric English archaeologists who had stumbled into Egyptian tombs had more or less got what they deserved, in von Igelfeld's view, when they were struck down by mysterious curses (probably no more than long dormant microbes sealed into the pyramids).

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That would never had happened had it been German archaeology that made the discovery; the German professors would undoubtedly would have sent their assistants in first.

Source: Professor Dr Moritz-Maria von Igelfeld (Alexander McCall Smith). 2004; "On being light blue." In *At the Villa of Reduced Circumstances*. Random House, New York.

W.R. Inge on Being an Historian

Events in the past may be roughly divided into those which probably never happened and those which do not matter. This is what makes the trade of Historian so attractive.

Source: William Ralph Inge, Dean of St. Paul's, London. 1929. *Prognostications. Assessments and Anticipations*.

Robertson Davies on Archaeologists and Architecture

Archaeologists are rarely purchasers, Mr. Gilmartin. Scholars, you see. Not well-off.... When it comes to house-property, archaeologists rarely rise above what we call an Old World Cottage. Something half-timbered, and easily convertible to modern. Not destroying the authentic atmosphere, of course, but quaint.

Source: Robertson Davies. 1991. *Murder and Walking Spirits*. Viking Press, New York City.

Howard Carter on the Good Old Days

Those were the great days of excavating... anything to which a fancy was taken, from a scarab to an obelisk, was just appropriated, and if there was a difference with a brother excavator, one laid for him with a gun.

Source: Howard Carter, 1923. Quoted in Glyn Daniel, *150 Years of Archaeology*, 1950. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Tsianina Blackstone on Good Archaeology Friends

Tsianina Blackstone, the famous Cherokee-Creek mezzo-soprano, first met archaeologist Edgar Lee Hewett at the Panama-California Exposition of 1915. She eventually became Hewett's protege and friend, despite Hewett's decidedly weird idea of social conventions:

Tsianina knew little about archaeology, but she was to remember the day she met [Edgar Lee] Hewett vividly because of a peculiar request he made of her. She noticed that as he showed her the skulls of ancient people on display in his [San Diego, California] Museum of Man, he paid particular attention to her own head. Presently he said, "You have made so much out of your life in such a short time and your head is so beautifully shaped, I would consider it a great contribution to the history of your people if you would let us have your head when you depart for the Happy Hunting Ground."

Tsianina made no reply, but inside she didn't feel so good. She later wrote, "He frightened me, and I had a secret fear of having my skull on display for all to see. Imagine my relief when my beloved friend left for his Happy Hunting Ground before me!"

Source: Beatrice Chauvenet. 1983. *Hewett and Friends: A biography of Santa Fe's vibrant era*. Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.

Lewis Binford on Why He'll Never Be in a Quote Collection

Paula Sabloff: You have a reputation as being rough around the edges in language.

Lewis Binford: If I'm trying to say something that I don't think has been said, there's no trite way of saying it. A cliché is usually pretty meaningless and also obvious to

anyone who reads it. If you're trying to say something with the same words that everybody else is using, but you think you don't want them to think about it the same way, you have to play with the way you use words. If an editor or person reads my sentence, which I wrote in clear prose, and says, "Yeah, I know what you're saying," then I know that he missed the point; and I take that sentence and make a whole paragraph out of it to make sure that he understands what is different about what I am saying. I write so that people have got to read and reread it so that maybe they have got the meaning.

PS: Why? Why didn't you think the first time worked?

LB: Because they translated it into what they thought I was saying, not what I was saying. In a sense, the clearer writing is, the more ambiguous the terms are.... In other words, the clearest sentence would be the sentence that everybody would give meaning to immediately. But the degree [to which] they all do it the same way is not at all clear.

PS: You mean in scientific writing.

LB: That's right. And if I'm trying to manipulate a reader, I can't do it by making him think he knows what I'm saying. Because if I think I'm saying something that he doesn't know; or I think I'm saying something new, then why should he think it's all so clear and he's thought it all along?

Source: Paula Sabloff. 1998. *Conversations with Lew Binford: Drafting the New Archaeology*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Paul Bahn on Nosiness as an Adaptive Trait

It takes very special qualities to devote one's life to problems with no attainable solutions and to poking around

in dead people's garbage: Words like 'masochistic', 'nosy,' and 'completely batty' spring to mind.

Source: Paul Bahn. 1989. *Bluff Your Way in Archaeology*. Ravette Books, West Sussex.

Kage Baker (as William Flinders Petrie) on What Matters

How can we ever know the truth about the past? Historians lie; time wrecks everything. But if you're careful, boy, if you're methodical, if you measure and record and look for the bloody boring little details, like potsherds, and learn what they mean—you can get the dead to speak again, out of their ashes. That's worth more than all the gold and amulets in the world, that's the work of my life. That's what I was born for. Nothing matters except my work.

Source: Kage Baker. 2002. The Queen in Yellow. In *Black Projects, White Knights: The Company Dossiers*. Golden Gryphon Press, Urbana, Illinois.

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*Archaeologists date
any old thing.*

Why Study the Past?

Why do we study the past? The reasons are as multiple as we are, and very rarely do we ever answer “because it was there.”

John Boardman on Stimulus Packages

The greatest stimulus to progress and belief in a future is knowledge and understanding of a past.

Source: John Boardman 1986. *The Oxford History of the Classical World*, edited by John Boardman, Jasper Griffin and Oswyn Murray. Oxford University Press, Oxford, England.

Charles Darwin on Serviceable Observations

About thirty years ago there was much talk that geologists ought only to observe and not theorize; and I well remember someone saying that at this rate a man might as well go into a gravel-pit and count the pebbles and describe the colours. How odd it is that anyone should not see that all observation must be for or against some view to be of any service.

Source: Charles Darwin. 1861. Letter to Henry Fawcett, quoted in Steven J. Gould “Dinosaurs in the haystack,” *Natural History* 3(92):2-13.

John Lloyd Stephens on the Moral Effect of Maya Monuments

Of the moral effect of the [Mayan] monuments themselves, standing as they do in the depths of a tropical forest, silent and solemn, strange in design, excellent in sculpture, rich in ornament, different from the works of any other people, their uses and purposes and whole history so entirely unknown with hieroglyphics explaining all, but being perfectly unintelligible, I shall not pretend to convey any idea. Often the imagination was pained in gazing at them.

Source: John Lloyd Stephens. 1841. *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*. Vol. I: 123-124. Reprinted in 1949 by Rutgers University Press; 2 volumes.

J.J. Worsaae on Serious Pasts

Any country which takes itself seriously ought to know about its own past.

Source: Jens Jacob Asmussen Worsaae, quoted in Stine Wiell, 1996, A letter from Line: the Flensburg antiquities and the Danish-Prussian/Austrian war of 1864. *Antiquity* 70:270.

Clarence Darrow Hunching the World Along

The objector and the rebel who raises his voice against what he believes to be the injustice of the present and the wrongs of the past is the one who hunches the world along.

Source: Clarence Darrow. 1920. Address to the court in "The Communist Trial", *People v. Lloyd*.

Ivor Noel Hume on What Holds Us Apart

Peering into the face of a skeleton, an archaeologist cannot help but be aware that he is eyeball to eye socket

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with someone who knew the answers to many, if not all, of the questions he is asking. For my part, I know that although the bones may be those of a person whose culture rendered him superficially different from me, a cold wind still made him shiver, liquor fuddled his senses, and in the night a woman's arms made yesterday and tomorrow unimportant. In these, and virtually every other human emotion, we are alike. Our hands touch, but the silence of eternity holds us apart.

Source: Ivor Noel Hume. 1979. *Martin's Hundred*. University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville.

William Kotzwinkle on What Drives Us

"The old bones we seek, Charles, are the clues to what our ancestors were like. When you touch one of those bones – when you open the ground and see it there before you, as it has lain for a million years – well, you suddenly feel as if you were that ancient man. It is my belief," said Sir Henry, stooping to wash his face in the water, "that we carry the traces of these men within us."

"But how, Sir Henry?"

"You and your father have certain physical characteristics in common. And your grandfather, Charles, I've seen his picture. You resemble him too. If we could see your great-grandfather and your great-great-grandfather, we'd find other similarities. You are all these men, Charles. They've passed their life on down to you. In a very real way, my boy, they live in you."

Sir Henry stood up from the stream. "So when you touch one of the ancient bones, the ancient men in you respond. That is the thrill of hunting these bones, Charles, that is what draws me. That moment of

awakening, when our ancestors speak to us once again, is more wonderful than anything I've ever known. And I want all men to know that feeling, Charles. I want to show them their past and make it live."

Source: William Kotzwinkle 1976. *The Leopard's Tooth*. Seabury Press, London.

Malcolm X on Fulfilling the Dream

A race of people is like an individual man; until it uses its own talent, takes pride in its own history, expresses its own culture, affirms its own selfhood, it can never fulfill itself.

Source: Attributed to Malcolm X (El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz).

Clark Erickson on Indigenous Knowledge

Indigenous knowledge systems of landscape management need to be studied and evaluated before they disappear forever. In cases where the prehistoric infrastructure has been completely abandoned, investigations using archaeology and agricultural experiments may be able to recover sufficient information on how these systems function to adequately evaluate them and potentially put them back into use. Both contemporary and prehistoric systems may hold the clue to future rural development in regions such as the Andes where farming has many limitations. In many cases, the current social, political, and economic context, not the indigenous technology, is the cause of low production and poverty.

Source: Clark L. Erickson 1992. Prehistoric landscape management in the Andean highlands: Raised field agriculture and its environmental impact. *Population and Environment* 13(4):285-300.

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Alexander Toynbee on History's Uses

History not used is nothing, for all intellectual life is action, like practical life, and if you don't use the stuff well, it might as well be dead.

Source: Arnold J. Toynbee April 17, 1955. NBC television broadcast.

Susan Sontag on Vanishing Beauty

The past itself, as historical change continues to accelerate, has become the most surreal of subjects—making it possible... to see a new beauty in what is vanishing.

Source: Susan Sontag. 1977 (reprint 2001). "Melancholy Objects," *On Photography*. Macmillan, New York.

Joan Gero on Distinguishing the Past from the Present

The archaeologist partakes of, contributes to, is validated by, and dutifully records present-day social and political structures in the identification of research problems and in the interpretation of findings. It remains for reflective, socio-political research in archaeology to decipher the present while we unearth the past, and to distinguish the two whenever possible.

Source: Joan M. Gero. 1985. Socio-politics and the woman-at-home ideology. *American Antiquity* 50(2):347.

Charles Baudelaire on Derived Pleasures

The past is interesting not only for the beauty which the artists for whom it was the present were able to extract from it, but also as past, for its historical value. The same goes for the present. The pleasure which we derive from the representation of the present is due not only to the

beauty in which it may be clothed, but also from its essential quality of being present.

Source: Charles Baudelaire 1863. "Beauty, Fashion, and Happiness," in *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*. Phaidon

Charles Austin Beard Quotes Hari Seldon

If a science of history were achieved, it would, like the science of celestial mechanics, make possible the calculable prediction of the future in history. It would bring the totality of historical occurrences within a single field and reveal the unfolding future to its last end, including all the apparent choices made and to be made. It would be omniscience. The creator of it would possess the attributes ascribed by the theologians to God. The future once revealed, humanity would have nothing to do except to await its doom.

Source: Charles Austin Beard. 1933. "Written History as an Act of Fate." Annual address of the president of the American Historical Association, delivered at Urbana, Illinois. December 28, 1933. *American Historical Review* 39(2):219-231.

Tom Dillehay on Temporal Variations

It is not known when and where the first humans migrated to the Americas. Given the presence of valid archeological sites, dated to between 12,500 and 11,000 years ago, it is likely that people arrived in the Southern Hemisphere no later than 15,000 to 14,000 years ago. Further, we are a long way from being able to specify all of the conditions under which these first human adaptations occurred in the Southern Hemisphere. As a starting point, we must recognize that the key issue is not rapid, blitzkrieg movement but efficient adaptation

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of technological, socioeconomic, and ideational practices over several generations within different local and regional populations. We must also develop research questions and strategies to study these practices on a comparative local and hemispherical basis that may lead us to significant insights into the plasticity of the late Pleistocene human populations. With more research, we should see that these populations were far more sub-culturally and temporally variable than has previously been envisioned.

Source: Tom D. Dillehay. 1999. The Late Pleistocene cultures of South America. *Evolutionary Anthropology* 7(6):206-216

Edward Bulwer Lytton on Clothing the Past

Archaeology has been called the handmaid of history; and, indeed, without its aid, history would as little represent the particular time it endeavours to recall as the drawing of a skeleton would represent the features and the form by which the individual human being was recognised while in life. It is to the skeleton of a former age that archaeology restores the flesh and the sinews and the lineaments that distinguish it from the countless centuries of which it is a link, clothes in it the very garments that it wore, and rebuilds the very home in which it dwelt.

Source: Edward Bulwer Lytton. 1869 (published 1874). *Speeches of Edward, Lord Lytton*. W. Blackwood, London.

History's Pitfalls



One problem archaeologists and historians must face when studying the past is the set of assumptions we have about it. The past, with all its decisions completed, its participants dead and its history told, is what the general public perceives as the immutable bedrock on which we stand. But as purveyors of the past, we recognize that the bedrock is really quicksand, that bits of the story are yet untold, and that what has been told comes tainted by the conditions of what we are today.

Michael Coe on Small Favors

I notice that archaeologists who come up with neat models for prehistoric cultural events seem to feel that they are presenting us with some sort of reality. It is lucky for these scholars that the long-dead subjects of their study cannot now contradict them.

Source: Michael Coe. 1978. The churches on the green: A cautionary tale. In *Archaeological Essays in Honor of Irving B. Rouse*, edited by Robert C. Dunnell and Edwin S. Hall, pp. 75-88. Mouton, the Hague.

Carl Sandburg on Buckets

I tell you the past is a bucket of ashes.

Source: Carl Sandburg. 1918. *Prairie. The Complete Poems of Carl Sandburg*. Harcourt, San Diego.

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Glynn Isaac on Matters of Faith

Most paleolithic archeologists ... tend to believe that the assemblages of humanly flaked stones that we recover in quantities from sites such as Olorgesailie preserve a great deal of valuable information about the craft traditions, the cultural affinities, and the economic life of the hominids who made them. This belief is in part a matter of faith, and there is a danger that in our enthusiasm we may overextend the exegesis of stone artifacts. It sometimes appears that all of us treat stone artifacts as infinitely complex repositories of paleocultural information and assume that it is only the imperfections of our present analytical systems that prevent us from decoding them. But is this really so?

Source: Glynn Isaac. 1977 *Olorgesailie: Archeological Studies of a Middle Pleistocene Lake Basin in Kenya*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

George Cowgill on Reasonable Alternatives

Perhaps the largest contribution of “post-processual” thought has been that data on tangible things are indispensable but never enough; we must also take account of ancient thoughts, attitudes, and the meanings of objects. In the absence of ample texts, this poses a grave challenge. It won’t do simply to make intuitive leaps and claim that they must be correct, and the notion of “multiple pasts” is simply an evasion. Assuredly, there are multiple legitimate “takes” on the past, but the past was real, and we must try to get it right.

We can only approach this by taking a skeptical and critical attitude toward one another’s ideas, constructive in tone but constantly demanding that all

steps in the reasoning be explicit and that all reasonable alternatives be considered and assessed in the light of evidence.

Source: George L. Cowgill. 2008 How I got to where I am now: One thing after another, a (mostly) linear narrative. *Ancient Mesoamerica* 19:165–173.

Adrienne Rich on Complicated Journeys

Every journey into the past is complicated by delusions, false memories, false namings of the past.

Adrienne Rich. 1986. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution*. WW Norton, New York.

Lawrence Flanagan on Quintessential Stumbling Blocks

In a manner of speaking, the fact that humankind itself is unpredictable is the quintessential stumbling-block for archaeologists. We have to assume that the people whose dwelling-places, artefacts, lives even, we are dealing with were rational, integrated, sane and sensible human beings. Then we look around at our own contemporaries and wonder how this belief can possibly be sustained.

Source: Laurence Flanagan. 1998. *Ancient Ireland: Life Before the Celts*. Palgrave-MacMillan, London.

Nathan Light on the Mental Prison of Modern Myths

Myths of all cultures, including our own, reflect people's deep desire to marvel at the feats of a few heroic ancestors who lived in a far simpler world. Modern myths see prehistory as sharply divided in time and space, stages of evolution (Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages, hunting and gathering, nomadism, agriculture), and races and

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continents (Asia, Africa, Europe). Such myths help us reduce the immense complexity of the past to manageable, if less than fully accurate, units. However they can become mental prisons when we do not recognize them for the simplifications that they are.

Source: Nathan Light. 1999. Tabloid archaeology: Is television trivializing science? *Discovering Archaeology* March/April 1999: 98.

Ezra Pound on Anesthesia

We do not know the past in chronological sequence. It may be convenient to lay it out anesthetized on the table with dates pasted on here and there, but what we know we know by ripples and spirals eddying out from us and from our time.

Source: Ezra Pound. 1938. *Guide to Kulchur*. New Directions (1970 edition), New York.

Chris Ballard on Unifying Narratives

The search for unifying narratives, for a single logic that might underpin archaeological explanation universally, is a misplaced venture. Rather than grading different narratives for some form of absolute truth content, we should be asking which alternative we find the most useful relative to the immediate question at hand. One law to be left in cleaning out the legislative cupboard must be the defence against the closure that is effected by totalizing discourses—the notion that there is a single truth, a single narrative, a single past out there to be found, and that there is but one way of telling it.

Source: Chris Ballard. 2003. Writing (pre)history: Narrative and archaeological explanation in the New Guinea Highlands. *Archaeology in Oceania* 38:135-148.

Lisa Maurizio on Sweating Temples and Bleeding Rooftops

The community of believers, who authored the Delphic oracles as well as their narrative frames, have left us a tradition of oracular tales containing authentic oracles whose very purpose was to transcend the particulars of time, place, and circumstance in favor of establishing Apollo's presence on earth. If modern historians insist on recovering the factual details of any one story in the service of a modern secularism or positivism, they risk robbing all of Greece of its sweating temples and bleeding rooftops.

Source: Lisa Maurizio. 1997. Delphic Oracles As Oral Performances: Authenticity and Historical Evidence. *Classical Antiquity* 16(2):308-334.

Barbara Kingsolver on Misunderstandings

Misunderstanding is my cornerstone. It's everyone's, come to think of it. Illusions mistaken for truth are the pavement under our feet. They are what we call civilization.

Barbara Kingsolver. 1998. *The Poisonwood Bible*. Harper Flamingo, New York

Nathaniel Hawthorne on the Slavery of the Past

Shall we never, never get rid of this Past? It lies upon the Present like a giant's dead body! ... Just think a moment, and it will startle you to see what slaves we are to bygone times— to Death, if we give the matter the right word!

Source: Nathaniel Hawthorne. 1851. *The House of the Seven Gables*. Wildside Press, New York.

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Voltaire on the Basis of History

The first foundations of all history are the recitals of the fathers to the children, transmitted afterward from one generation to another; at their origin they are at the very most probable, when they do not shock common sense, and they lose one degree of probability in each generation.

Source: Voltaire (English translation, 1924). *The Philosophical Dictionary*. translated 1924 by H.I. Woolf. Knopf, New York.

Ambrose Bierce on Niebuhr's Lies

HISTORY, n. An account mostly false, of events mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers mostly knaves, and soldiers mostly fools:

Of Roman history, great Niebuhr's shown
'Tis nine-tenths lying. Faith, I wish 'twere known,
Ere we accept great Niebuhr as a guide,
Wherein he blundered and how much he lied.

(Salder Bupp)

Source: Ambrose Bierce. 1911. *Devil's Dictionary*.

Voltaire on Ancient Tricks

History is nothing but a pack of tricks we play on the dead.

(French original) *J'ai vu un temps où vous n'aimiez guères l'histoire. Ce n'est après tout qu'un ramas de tracasseries qu'on fait aux morts...*

Source: Voltaire (Francois Marie Arouet). 1757. Letter to Pierre Robert Le Cornier de Cideville. In *Voltaire's Correspondence* vol. xxxi. edited by Theodore Besterman, 1958. Geneva.

Michael Ondaatje on Unsafely Settled Places

The past is still, for us, a place that is not safely settled.

Source: Michael Ondaatje 1990. Introduction, *The Faber Book of Contemporary Canadian Short Stories*. Faber and Faber Limited, Toronto.

Paul Bahn on Multiple Theories in Paleolithic Art

There currently is a tendency among those having little knowledge of Paleolithic art to want or assume it to be useful in simple terms, to see it as primarily functional.... [but] we are faced here with at least two-thirds of art history, spanning 25 millennia and a vast area of the world. Indeed, when one takes into account such very early specimens as the Berekhat Ram figurine, Pleistocene art comprises about 99% of art history. ... It is obviously futile to try and encompass all this within one theory.

Source: Paul G. Bahn, 1995/1996. New developments in Pleistocene art. *Evolutionary Anthropology* 4(6):204-215.

Margaret Murray on a Welter of Flint Chips

The trend of all knowledge at the present is to specialize, but archaeology has in it all the qualities that call for the wide view of the human race, of its growth from the savage to the civilized, which is seen in all stages of social and religious development. Archaeology is the study of humanity itself, and unless that attitude towards the subject is kept in mind archaeology will be overwhelmed by impossible theories or a welter of flint chips.

Source: Margaret Murray. 1961. First steps in archaeology, *Antiquity* 35:8-13.

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Adam Zertal on Being Overwhelmed

Although archaeology uses some modern technologies, many of its conclusions are drawn on the basis of intuition, rather than on objective measure. the quality of excavation, surveying, and publication of results is very uneven.... It is easy to be overwhelmed by the number of hypotheses, suppositions, and presuppositions, supported or not by a mass of data.

Source: Adam Zertal. 1991. "Israel enters Canaan". *Biblical Archaeology Review* (Sept/Oct 1991):330-331.

What Have We Learned?



Despite the handicaps that we as professional past students face, and some might say despite our best efforts, there are some general laws of human nature that we have identified and thus contributed to the present and future of humanity.

Charles Austin Beard on the Lessons of History (attributed)

The major lessons of history? There are four: First, whom the gods destroy they first make mad with power. Second, the mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small. Third, the bee fertilizes the flower it robs. Fourth, when it is dark enough you can see the stars.

Source: Although this quote has been attributed to historian Charles Austin Beard, I couldn't find an original source. This version is the one Martin Luther King used in "The death of evil upon the sea-shore" in *Strength to Love*, 1981. Fortress Press, Minneapolis.

J. William Schopf on the Place of Pond Scum

For four-fifths of our history, our planet was populated by pond scum.

J. William Schopf (paleobiologist at UCLA), 1990. *Discover* 11:102.

Thomas Hester (attributed) on Archaeology Glory

Not all sites are Pompeii.

Attributed to Thomas R. Hester

C. Loring Brace et al. on Chimerical Concepts

The old fashioned chimerical concept of “race” is hopelessly inadequate to deal with the human biological reality of Egypt, ancient or modern. But neither the use of clines nor clusters alone can present a complete account. An assessment of both is necessary before we can understand the biological nature of the people of the Nile valley. Because the ancient Egyptians lived with this knowledge of themselves, they “did not think in terms of race” (Yurco 1989:24). For our own part, we should recognize how “presumptuous” it is “to assign our own primitive racial labels” (Yurco 1989:58) to them or to anyone else. These not only prevent us from dealing with human biological variation in an adequate fashion; but they also lend themselves to the perpetuation of social injustice. The “race” concept did not exist in Egypt, and it is not mentioned in Herodotus, the Bible, or any of the other writings of classical antiquity. Since it has neither biological nor social justification, we should strive to see that it is eliminated from both public and private usage. Its absence will be missed by no one, and we shall all be better off without it. R.I.P.

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Source: C. Loring Brace, David P. Tracer, Lucia Allen Yaroch, John Robb, Kari Brandt and A. Russell Nelson. 1993. Clines and clusters versus "race:" A test in ancient Egypt and a case of a death on the Nile. *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology* 36:1-31.

William Schlesinger on Global Stewardship

In some corners of the globe, policy makers and politicians pay close attention to the science that shows what will happen to a planet under inattentive stewardship. In much of the undeveloped world, however, the local population is perplexed about what to do to ensure a sustainable future when facing the immediate question of how to provide enough food and clean water to survive each day. Sadly, in other corners, concern is shallow; many of those who could afford to help believe that some type of divine intervention will carry us through a bottleneck of an exponentially rising human population and its increasing demand for resources on a finite planet. They want no personal sacrifice. Perhaps what we learned best from our early field studies of ecology is that human behavior might not be far removed from that of other organisms. Each squirrel on my bird tray feeds as if tomorrow is simply another day. ...

The question we now face is whether we can live the way we aspire to today, without degrading the life support systems of the planet that would sustain us tomorrow.

Source: William H. Schlesinger. 2006. Global change ecology. *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* 21(6):348-351.

Bruce D. Smith on Niches and Domestication

Currently, research on domestication is carried out on two largely disconnected scales—at the level of

individual plant and animal species to document the “what, when, and where” of domestication worldwide, and at a regional or larger scale, to identify causal “macro” variables (such as climate change and population growth) that may account for “why” human societies first domesticated target species. The theory of niche construction provides a link between research at these two different scales of analysis by offering insights into the intervening “how” of domestication—the general human behavioral context within which macroevolutionary factors forged new human-plant/animal relationships of domestication.

Source: Bruce D. Smith. 2007. The Ultimate Ecosystem Engineers. *Science* 315:1797-1798.

Poyer and Kelly on the Mystification of the Mikea

[Madagascar hunter-gatherers, the] Mikea who juggle maize horticulture, wage labor, fishing, foraging, and entrepreneurship have a certain value in the regional community. But mysterious forest-dwellers who run naked through animal paths in a deep thorn forest—now there’s a moneymaker...

The place that hunter-gatherers hold in the imaginations of nonforaging peoples is an unavoidable element of their identity. As international research and tourism continue to expand, responses to their economic stimulus will affect the evolution of foraging identity. Although population growth and environmental degradation will limit its economic viability, foraging may well continue as an element of a mixed economy in the world, including the Mikea Forest. At the same time, the attraction of foraging—or more accurately, what the

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Western world takes foraging to be—to the business of research, tourism, and journalism may prove to be a strong factor in shaping the future of hunter-gatherers.

Source: Lin Poyer and Robert L. Kelly. 2000. Mystification of the Mikea: Constructions of foraging identity in southwest Madagascar. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 56:163-185.

Gusti Kollman on History's Ironies

You know, it's so strange, I've lived through four forms of government in my life: monarchy, republic, Hitler's Reich, American democracy. The [Weimar] republic was only ... 1918 to 1933, that's fifteen years! Imagine that, only fifteen years. But, then, Hitler was going to last a thousand years and he lasted only ... 1933 to 1945... twelve, twelve years only! Hah!

Source: Gusti Bienstock Kollman (born 1912, escaped Austria to the United States after Kristallnacht 1938).

Rosemary Joyce on the Ancient Maya

The ancient Maya" is, fundamentally, an illusory subject that too often stands in the way of a real appreciation of the diversity that art historians and archaeologists are documenting through meticulous work.... [W]ith contemporary understandings of the complexity of identification and misidentification, and recognition long past in general anthropology and specific archaeology that language does not equal ethnicity, it is clearly time for specialists on the deep history of Yucatan, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras to be freed from the tyranny of a unitary, illusory subject that never existed outside of our texts.

Rosemary A. Joyce. 2005. What kind of subject of study is "The Ancient Maya" *Reviews in Anthropology* 34:295-311.

Andrew Jones Perceives the Neolithic

In many areas of Neolithic Europe the chronological evidence suggests that monuments are found alongside agriculture or that monuments actually precede agriculture, so reversing the traditional causal emphasis. Rather than viewing monuments as a by-product of agriculture, we may view them as central to the process of becoming Neolithic. If we are to consider the Neolithic as a process that engendered an alteration of beliefs and social relations then monument construction appears to be a critical element in this process. Monuments evoke an altered conception of both time and place; they embody an alteration of the natural world, and their construction involves the creation of a new kind of place in the landscape which, by their very nature, they endure. This perception of the world may be allied to the perceptions required of the agricultural regime, but there is no necessary relationship. The relationship between food production and monumentality is therefore complex.

... If we are to understand the Neolithic as a series of changing relationships between people and the natural world, then we are required to take into account not only the temporal and spatial experience invested by monuments. We also need to consider the temporal and spatial experience associated with plants and animals and with the production, use and deposition of artefacts.... What interests us here is how each element was deployed in the process of constructing and living in the Neolithic.

Source: Andrew Jones. 2001. *Archaeological Theory and Scientific Practice*. Cambridge Press, London.

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Douglas Adams on Subsistence

The History of every major Galactic Civilization tends to pass through three distinct and recognizable phases, those of Survival, Inquiry and Sophistication, otherwise known as the How, Why and Where phases. For instance, the first phase is characterized by the question “How can we eat?” the second by the question “Why do we eat?” and the third by the question “Where shall we have lunch?”

Source: Douglas Adams. 1981. *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Universe*. Harmony Books, New York.

Terry Hunt on Scary Parables

Despite repeated claims, Rapa Nui does not appear to represent a case of “ecocide.” The documented population collapse for Rapa Nui occurred as a consequence of European contacts, with Old World diseases and slave-trading. As [JoAnn VanTilburg has] noted, the scary parables and metaphors for disaster represent “a projection of Western values which emphasizes the self-destruction of the Rapa Nui culture over the actual, near-annihilation of it by contact with the West.” Indeed, early ethnographer Alfred Metraux described the historic genocide as “one of the most hideous atrocities committed by white men in the South Seas” and as “the catastrophe that wiped out Easter Island’s civilization”.

Today the idea of “ecocide” enjoys popular acceptance, but an actual genocide decimated the native Rapa Nui population and its culture. Unfortunately, the victims of cultural and physical extermination have been turned into the perpetrators of their own demise.

Source: Terry L. Hunt. 2007. Rethinking Easter Island’s ecological catastrophe. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 34:485-502.

Donna Gabaccia on the Immigrant Paradigm

France, Canada, Germany, Australia, and Argentina are just as much nations of immigrants as the United States is, yet none has generated an equivalent of the immigrant paradigm as symbol of their nation's distinctiveness.

The immigrant paradigm, I believe, is the product of the unique manner in which the United States has grappled with ... ambivalence to create an American nation. The United States shares with Canada and Australia a long history of subjecting and excluding the indigenous peoples it conquered. Like Canada, furthermore, the United States has incorporated territories of several empires (French and English in the case of both; Spanish in the case of the United States). What makes the United States different from Canada and Australia is its long history of slavery as a source of significant national disunity. It is this history, I believe ... that explains the creation of an immigrant paradigm in the United States and not in the other English-speaking countries. ... The racial dynamics of the United States best explain the creation and persistence of an immigrant paradigm that ignores, when it does not also falsify, the history of African Americans.

Source: Donna R. Gabaccia. 1999. Is everywhere nowhere? Nomads, nations, and the immigrant paradigm of United States history. *The Journal of American History* 86(3):1115-1134.

Paul Theroux on Design Faults

Man sprang out of the faulty world, Charlie. Therefore, I'm imperfect. What's the use? It's a bad design, the human body. Skin's not thick enough, bones aren't strong enough, too little hair, no claws, no fangs. Drop

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us and we break! Why, we're not even symmetrical. One foot bigger than the other, left-handed, right-handed, our noses run. Look where our heart is.

We weren't meant to stand up straight—our posture exposes the most sensitive parts of the body, heart and genitals. We should be on all fours, hairier, more resistant to heat and cold, with tails. What happened to my tail, that's what I'd like to know....

It's humiliating to have a body with a design fault.

Source: Paul Theroux. 1982. *The Mosquito Coast*. Houghton-Mifflin, Boston.

Kathleen Deagan on Ethnic Stews

The distinctions in Anglo-American and Ibero-American self-identity persist today. While few Anglo-Americans openly acknowledge either American Indian or African components in their sense of cultural identity, most Latinos do. Since at least the early part of the twentieth century, Latin American literature, poetry, art, music, and popular culture have acknowledged and celebrated the multiple European, American, African, and Asian roots of contemporary society.

Archaeology's contribution to the ongoing efforts to understand American origins and cultural identity has been in the discovery of patterns and processes in the households of people who otherwise reside at the margins of history but who, nevertheless, shaped colonial American society in profound ways. It is ironic that it is in the Spanish colonial world—recently the focus of considerable political reproach for the consequences of Columbus's voyages—that the combined efforts of archaeology and history are revealing, if not a colonial

melting pot, then at least a genuine early American “ethnic stew.”

Source: Kathleen Deagan. 1996. Colonial transformation: Euro-American cultural genesis in the early Spanish-American colonies. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 52(2):135-160.

William H. Calvin on the Mind's Big Bang

Some 50,000 years ago a burst of technological and artistic activity erupted in Africa and soon become a great profusion of art, trading, body decoration, and new tools. The material evidence of that creative explosion is taken as an indicator of the mind's “big bang”: the time after which *Homo sapiens* did things from which we infer that, for the first time, people could think long, complicated thoughts, much as we do today.

Source: William H. Calvin. 2004. The Fate of the Soul. *Natural History* 113(5):52-56.

Nurit Bird-David on Hunter Gatherer Subsistence

[A]ll modern hunter-gatherers appear to have a distinct, if heterogeneous, mode of subsistence... Normally some members of the group pursue hunting and gathering. Their associates do not, but they keep in close contact with the former. The experiences of the former reinforce the common trust in the viability of hunting and gathering for everybody in the group. While not currently involved in hunting and gathering, the latter therefore do not fully commit themselves to their respective diverse activities. They shift between them on the basis of opportunities, and eventually take up hunting and gathering. Meanwhile, those who initially pursued hunting and gathering possibly shift now to

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other activities. Through their own direct experiences, they keep up the knowledge and skills which are prerequisite for a subsistence based on forest resources, while at the same time it is now their experiences which reinforce the common trust in the viability of hunting and gathering. What we have here, then, is a group of people who share the knowledge and skills of hunting and gathering, as well as a trust in its variability. They reproduce these among themselves. However, although they hunt and gather regularly, at any time only a core of people—whose composition constantly changes—actually engages in these activities.

Source: Nurit Bird-David 1992 Beyond 'the hunting and gathering mode of subsistence': Culture-Sensitive observations on the Nayaka and other modern hunter-gatherers. *Man* 27 :19-44.

Jill Lepore: History in Seven Words

History is the study of dead people.

Source: Jill Lepore. 2007. Topic Summary in Seven Words: History. 2007 Ignoble Awards. *Annals of Improbable Research* 13(6):17.

Barbara Bocek on Rampant Rodents

....In only seven years, Unit 18 recovered 8 percent of its cultural material contents, and Level 1 comprising the upper 10 cm recovered 41 percent. At this rate, including transportation of materials both in and out of Unit 18, the unit could be completely restocked with equivalent cultural materials in 88 years after the first excavation.

Source: Barbara Bocek. 1992. The Jasper Ridge re-excavation experiment: Rates of artifact mixing by rodents. *American Antiquity* 57(2):261-269.

C. Loring Brace on Standardized Testing

If the anthropological evidence...leads us to the conclusion that the average intellectual capability in all living human groups should be exactly the same, then it follows that there is something seriously wrong when tests purporting to measure these capabilities produce different average figures when administered to different groups. Average differences in test scores, rather than indicating inherent differences in intellectual capacity, actually can serve as indicators of the effects of the different learning experiences that are the consequences of social inequality.

Source: C. Loring Brace. 1999. An anthropological perspective on "race" and intelligence: The non-clinal nature of human cognitive capabilities. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 55(2):245-264.

Donald Crabtree on the Beauty of Projectile Point Technology

There seems to be an erroneous opinion that the Folsom was made for beauty and its flutes for decoration, or due to the desire of the worker to reserve for posterity a record of his knapping skill. I do not believe the aboriginal had beauty in mind, or art for art's sake, but, rather, was designing a practical and functional tool of high quality. As a stone-worker, I consider this point to be structurally and mechanically the best designed for its purpose of any weapon produced in this period of time.

Source: Donald E. Crabtree. 1966. A stoneworker's approach to analyzing and replicating the Lindenmeier Folsom. *Tebitwa* 9:3-19.

Bruce Trigger on Universal Activities

Archaeology is not a universal or self-evident activity. In some countries, people debate whether foreign

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archaeologists are treasure hunters or spies. They cannot imagine that anyone would be interested in going to so much trouble and expense to study the past for its own sake.

Source: Bruce Trigger. 2006. *A History of Archaeological Thought*. 2nd edition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Douglas Adams and the Shoe Event Horizon

Many years ago this was a thriving, happy planet—people, cities, shops, a normal world. Except that on the high streets of these cities there were slightly more shoe shops than one might have thought necessary. And slowly, insidiously, the numbers of these shoe shops were increasing. It's a well-known economic phenomenon but tragic to see it in operation, for the more shoe shops there were, the more shoes they had to make and the worse and more unwearable they became. And the worse they were to wear, the more people had to buy to keep themselves shod, and the more the shops proliferated, until the whole economy of the place passed what I believe is termed the "Shoe Event Horizon", and it became no longer economically possible to build anything other than shoe shops. Result—collapse, ruin and famine. Most of the population died out. Those few who had the right kind of genetic instability mutated into birds—you've seen one of them—who cursed their feet, cursed the ground and vowed that none should walk on it again. Unhappy lot.

Source: Douglas Adams. 1995. *Restaurant at the End of the Universe*. Random House, London.

Ariotti and Oxby on Predation and Production

The idea of a herding-based Neolithic is not inconsistent with the commonly accepted definition of the Neolithic in which food production—as opposed to the food predation characteristic of the Mesolithic—is central. There is just the need to recognise that agriculture is not the only way of producing food; and that foods such as milk and meat may be produced in the context of a herding economy. But the existence of stable communities of herder-hunter-fisher-gatherers, people who combine food production and food predation, and the fact that these communities are widespread over a large area and over a number of millenia, do cause one to query the usefulness of the opposition between food predation and food production in distinguishing between human cultures.

Source: Maria Ariotti and Clare Oxby, 1997 From hunter-fisher-gathering to herder-hunter-fisher-gathering in prehistoric times (Saharo-Sudanese region). *Nomadic Peoples* 1(2):98-119.

Max Beerbohm on the Positive State of Boredom

It is odd how little remains to a man of his own past—how few minutes of even his memorable hours are not clean forgotten, and how few seconds in any one of those minutes can be recaptured... I am middle-aged, and have lived a vast number of seconds. Subtract one third of these, for one mustn't count sleep as life. The residual number is still enormous. Not a single one of those seconds was unimportant to me in its passage. Many of them bored me, of course; but even boredom is a positive state: one chafes at it and hates it; strange that one should afterwards forget it! And stranger still that

of one's actual happinesses and unhappinesses so tiny and tattered a remnant clings about one!

Source: Max Beerbohm. 1921. *Even Now*. E.P. Dutton and Company, New York.

Is Archaeology a Science?



One of the great questions that we will never answer is whether the study of the past is a science or not. It seems that most of us, at least of those quoted in this book, don't think so.

Philip Barker: Why this is a question at all?

Every archaeological site is itself a document. It can be read by a skilled excavator, but it is destroyed by the very process which enables us to read it. Unlike the study of an ancient document, the study of a site by excavation is an unrepeatable experiment. In almost every other scientific discipline, with the exception of the study of the human individual and other animals, it is possible to test the validity of an experiment by setting up an identical experiment and noting the results. Since no two archaeological sites are the same, either in the whole or in detail, it is never possible to verify conclusively the results of one excavation by another, even on part of the same site, except in the broadest terms, and sometimes not even in these.

Source: Philip Barker. 2003. *Techniques of Archaeological Excavation*. CRC Press (Taylor and Francis), London.

John Younger: No

Could we rank Archaeology as a science, a gradation of insignificance, a standard of importance might be fixed: but Archaeology is not a science: it represents the miscellaneous gatherings of the curious and observant, the mine in which a judicious quarryman will find here a fragment, there a stone dressed to his hand, all ready to be fitted into an edifice whose plan he perhaps never imagined till the fragment came his way.

Source: John Younger. 1883. "The Study of Archaeology". *Transactions of the Glasgow Archaeological Society* V:131-137.

Robert Dunnell: No, but it wants to be

Archaeology... is, or wants to be, an empirical discipline which makes substantive claims about a body of phenomena. It is interested both in functional accounts that rely on proximate causes—the "How does it work?" kind of question—and in historical accounts that treat of ultimate causes—the "Why did it come into existence?" kind of question. It differs from other scientific disciplines in that it is not primarily concerned with the full range of characteristics of the archaeological record, but rather with those that the record acquired prior to the time it became an archaeological record. Consequently, it cannot simply be modelled on the existing hard sciences.

Source: Robert C. Dunnell. 1989. Philosophy of science and archaeology. In Valerie Pinsky and Alison Wylie (eds). *Critical Traditions in Contemporary Archaeology: Essays in the Philosophy, History, and Socio-politics of Archaeology*. CUP Archive, London.

Colin Renfrew: No, and that's its great strength

For is it not, these days, a defining characteristic of real science that it is testable? ... That archaeological science

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should sometimes give wrong answers, and that these can later be shown to be indeed erroneous, must be counted one of the subject's great strengths.

Source: Colin Renfrew 1992. The identity and future of archaeological science. In A.M. Pollard (ed). *New Developments in Archaeological Science*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Julian Henderson: Sometimes

The use of scientific techniques cannot always provide the answers to questions about how materials were produced and used. Much depends on the political, religious, economic and social environments in which the artisans worked. These parameters would clearly have affected the procedures used in ancient production processes.

Source: Julian Henderson. 2000. *The Science and Archaeology of Materials: An Investigation of Inorganic Materials*. Routledge, London.

Oscar Wilde: No, it's an Art

Indeed archaeology is only really delightful when transfused into some form of art.

Source: Oscar Wilde 1891 (1913 edition). "The Truth of Masks", *Intentions*. Methuen and Company, London.

A.M. Pollard: As much as anthropology is

The postulate that archaeology is a science appears to hinge on the degree to which "objective principles" are followed. Most archaeologists would subscribe to the use of objective principles in the interpretation of material evidence, and even in the reconstruction of such intangible entities as belief systems and cognitive processes. If this is so, then the contention that archaeology

is a science is proven, at least to the same degree as is the case for anthropology.

Source: A. M. Pollard. 2004 Scientific Thinking in Future Archaeologies. In John L. Bintliff (ed). *A Companion to Archaeology*. Blackwell Publishing, London.

David Clarke: No, just particles suspended in space

We must move from the traditional model of archaeological knowledge as a Gruyère cheese with holes in it to that of a sparse suspension of information particles of varying size, not even randomly distributed in archaeological space and time. The first thing we may deduce from this revision is that many of our taxonomic entity divisions are defined by lines drawn through gaps in the evidence and zones of greatest ignorance; this does not make these taxa invalid but it does gravely alter what constitutes meaningful manipulation and explanation of such entities.

Source: David Clarke. 1979. *The Analytical Archaeologist: Collected Papers of David L. Clarke*. Academic Press, New York.

R.E. Taylor: Not if we're anthropologists, it isn't

The century-long minority status of prehistoric archaeology, while embedded within American anthropology, has generally meant that archaeologists have accommodated and positioned themselves within the context of the existing dominant reality of the disciplinary structure. This dominant reality was most often focused on a sociocultural anthropology whose focus was, at best, incidental and, at worst, hostile to topics and issues of relevance to the pursuit of archaeological scholarship.

Source: R. E. Taylor, 2003. The "Two Cultures" in American Anthropological Archaeology. *The Review of Archaeology* 24(1):1-11.

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Lawrence Straus: No, and neither is genetic studies

Just as archaeological artifacts and style can be used to argue the opposite sides of diffusion vs. independent invention debates, so too can multivariate analyses of ancient human teeth and bones be used to support differing interpretations of modern maps of genes. Often the conflicting interpretations appear equally convincing. We must learn that the reading of gene frequencies may not be any more precise or straightforward than the archaeological interpretation of split-base bone points or Linearband pots or the physical anthropological diagnosis of metric and nonmetric traits from human burials.

Source: Lawrence G. Straus. 1998. Introduction to "The peoplings of Europe: a J.A.R. debate." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 58:399-419.

Anonymous: No, and it never will be

Prehistoric archaeology is not a science, and never will be one: it is simply a body of disconnected observations from which one or two more or less probably conclusions can be drawn.

Source: 1899 Unsigned Review of Cyprian Archaeology. *Nature* 61(1574):195

William Dever: No, it's an art, and sometimes not a very good one.

Good scholars, honest scholars, will continue to differ about the interpretation of archaeological remains simply because archaeology is not a science. It is an art. And sometimes it is not even a very good art.

Source: William Dever. 1996. in "Is this man a biblical archaeologist? BAR Interviews William Dever, Part 1. *Biblical Archaeology Review* 22(4):30-39ff.

Alice Beck Kehoe: Yes, eventually

American archaeology is ready to be a mature science, one that accepts the primacy of its empirical data—for these can outlast theories—and the political and human ramifications of its actions, as it reflectively constructs and compares interpretations. Tolerance for ambiguity is as essential as the Marshalltown trowel.

Source: Alice Beck Kehoe. 1998. *The Land of Prehistory: A critical history of American archaeology*. Routledge, New York.

R. Lee Lyman: Well, it could be, if...

I am not suggesting that archaeologists abandon use of ethnologically documented cultural processes as explanatory tools, nor am I suggesting that archaeologists abandon traditional ethnological and anthropological theories. What I am suggesting is that a little explored arena that is likely to contain evidence of unique processes—particularly, tempos and modes of change, to borrow Simpson's (1944) wording—is the temporally coarse-grained archaeological record itself. It is there that ethnologically imperceptible large-scale processes may be revealed. And, if the history of paleontology is any guide, it is precisely those sorts of revelations that will gain archaeologists a seat at the high table of anthropology.

To gain those insights, archaeologists must occasionally discard the tint of the archaeology as prehistoric ethnology mantra and consider the archaeological record as potentially revealing something invisible to an ethnologist. It may reveal nothing, but how will we know unless we look?

R. Lee Lyman. 2007. Archaeology's quest for a seat at the high table of anthropology. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 26:2:133-149.

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Lester Embree: No, but it's not science fiction

It used to be widely assumed that knowledge that was true once and for all and for always could be readily obtained in all sciences. That hope found much support regarding the formal sciences of logic and mathematics during most of the more than two millennia in which there has been not only science but also philosophy of science. It would be an error, however, to believe that a contextual and factual science like archaeology can meet such standards, which are hence inappropriate. That archaeological knowledge changes does not imply that archaeology is not a science. And indeed, not all parts of it change. ...Archaeological cognition is based on what has been observed thus far, this depends ultimately on perceived remains, and there is considerable openness to the future. Respect for data disciplines the entire endeavor. Archaeology is not science fiction.

Source: Lester Embree. 1994. Phenomnological Excavation of Archaeological Cognition, or How to Hunt Mammoth. pp. 377-396 (394) in *The Question of Hermeneutics: Essays in Honor of Joseph J. Kockelmans*. ed by Joseph J Kockelmans and Timothy J. Stapleton. Academic, Boston.

David Clarke: No, it's a discipline

The temptation to see [analytical] archaeology as an archaeological science must be resisted. Analytical archaeology is not a science but it is a discipline, its primary machinery is mathematical rather than scientific.

Source: David Clarke. 1968. *Analytical Archaeology*. Methuen, London.

Mortimer Wheeler: No, it's a vendetta

Archaeology is not a science, it is a vendetta.

Source: Mortimer Wheeler, as quoted in Peter Hopkirk, (1980) *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road: The Search for the Lost Cities and Treasures of Chinese Central Asia*. University of Massachusetts Press, Cambridge.

Ian Hodder: It is both a science and a humanity

Archaeology is not a science or a humanity. It is both. the archaeological process involves a heavy reliance on the natural sciences for dating, the study of site formation processes, the analysis of environmental change, the sourcing of exchanged artifacts and so on. But such information needs to be set within humanities (e.g., historical) an social science (e.g. social and cultural anthropological) knowledge about the organization of societies and the manipulation of culture. Indeed, the term material culture, the main focus of archaeological enquiry, neatly encapsules the duality inherent within the discipline. archaeology depends on the scientific study of materials in order to infer cultural patterning.

Source: Ian Hodder. 1999. *The Archaeological Process: An introduction*. Blackwell, London.

Graeme Barker: Only if I'm doing it

What is an archaeological "fact"? The basic building block for archaeological interpretation is that a certain object was found in a certain context or stratum. But we ourselves cannot be present at every find. Even if we find it ourselves, can we always be sure that we have observed it correctly, or that someone has not played a trick on us and buried it the night before, or that it is

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not in a secondary position, having been redeposited by some human or natural process such as erosion? Immediately we are having to make value judgments. What, and whom, can we trust?

Source: Graeme Barker. 1999. *Companion Encyclopedia of Archaeology*, 87-88. Routledge, London.

3: ART AND LITERATURE

In the carriages of the past,
you can't go anywhere.

—Maxim Gorky

Poetry

Emily Dickinson

The past is such a curious creature, To look her in the
face

A transport may reward us, or a disgrace.

Unarmed if any meet her, I charge him, fly!

Her rusty ammunition Might yet reply!"

Source: Emily Dickinson. 1896 (posthumously printed). XLV. *The Past*.

John Dryden

Not heaven itself upon the past has power;

But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.

Source: John Dryden. 1685. *Imitation of Horace*. Book iii. Ode 29, line 71

T.S. Eliot

After such knowledge, what forgiveness? Think now

History has many cunning passages, contrived
corridors

And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,

Guides us by vanities. Think now

She gives when our attention is distracted

And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late
What's not believed in, or if still believed,
In memory only, reconsidered passion. Gives too soon
Into weak hands, what's thought can be dispensed with
Till the refusal propagates a fear. Think
Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices
Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues
Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.
These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree.

Source: T.S. Eliot. 1920. *Poems by T.S.Eliot*. A.A.Knopf, New York.

William Shakespeare

There is a history in all men's lives
Figuring the nature of the times deceased;
The which observed, a man may prophesy,
With a near aim, of the main chance of things
As yet not come to life, which in their seeds
And weak beginnings lie intreasured.

Source: William Shakespeare. 1596. *Henry IV Part II*; Act 3, Scene 1.

Walt Whitman

The Past! The dark, unfathom'd retrospect!
The teeming gulf! The sleepers and the shadows!
The past! The infinite greatness of the past!
For what is the present, after all, but a growth out of
the past?

Source: Walt Whitman. 1900. Passage to India, in *Leaves of Grass*.

Lord Byron

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strewn.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew
still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

Source: The Destruction of Sennacherib. Lord Byron. 1815.

Edgar Allan Poe

Lone amphitheatre! Grey Coliseum!
Type of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length, at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage, and burning thirst,
(Thirst for the springs of love that in thee lie,)
I kneel, an altered, and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory.

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence and Desolation! and dim Night!
Gaunt vestibules! and phantom-peopled aisles!
I feel ye now: I feel ye in your strength!
O spells more sure than e'er Judaeen king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls:
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat:
Here, where the dames of Rome their yellow hair
Wav'd to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle:
Here, where on ivory couch the Caesar sat,
On bed of moss lies gloating the foul adder:

Here, where on golden throne the monarch loll'd,
Glides spectre-like unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the horned moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones.

These crumbling walls; these tottering arcades;
These mouldering plinths; these sad, and blacken'd
 shafts;
These vague entablatures; this broken frieze;
These shattered cornices; this wreck; this ruin;
These stones, alas! - these grey stones—are they all;
All of the great and the colossal left
By the corrosive hours to Fate and me?

“Not all,”—the echoes answer me; “not all:
Prophetic sounds, and loud, arise forever
From us, and from all ruin, unto the wise,
As in old days from Memnon to the sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men:—we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not desolate—we pallid stones;
Not all our power is gone; not all our Fame;
Not all the magic of our high renown;
Not all the wonder that encircles us;
Not all the mysteries that in us lie;
Not all the memories that hang upon,
And cling around about us now and ever,
And clothe us in a robe of more than glory.”

Source: Edgar Allan Poe. 1833. The Coliseum, as published in the
Baltimore Saturday Visiter (sic) on October 26, 1833.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
My name is Ozymandius, King of Kings,
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

Source: Ozymandias, 1817.

Bret Harte

I reside at Table Mountain, and my name is Truthful
James;
I am not up to small deceit or any sinful games;
And I'll tell in simple language what I know about the
row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislaw.

But first I would remark, that it is not a proper plan
For any scientific gent to whale his fellow-man,
And, if a member don't agree with his peculiar whim,
To lay for that same member for to "put a head" on him.

Now nothing could be finer or more beautiful to see
Than the first six months' proceedings of that same
Society,
Till Brown of Calaveras brought a lot of fossil bones
That he found within a tunnel near the tenement of
Jones.

Then Brown he read a paper, and he reconstructed there,
From those same bones, an animal that was extremely
rare;
And Jones then asked the Chair for a suspension of the
rules,
Till he could prove that those same bones was one of
his lost mules.

Then Brown he smiled a bitter smile, and said he was
at fault,
It seemed he had been trespassing on Jones's family
vault;
He was a most sarcastic man, this quiet Mr. Brown,
And on several occasions he had cleaned out the town.

Now I hold it is not decent for a scientific gent
To say another is an ass,—at least, to all intent;
Nor should the individual who happens to be meant
Reply by heaving rocks at him, to any great extent.

Then Abner Dean of Angel's raised a point of order,
when
A chunk of old red sandstone took him in the
abdomen,
And he smiled a kind of sickly smile, and curled up on
the floor,

And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

Source: The Society Upon the Stanislaus. 1912. Edited by T.R. Lounsbury. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut.

Ancient Wisdom



Yasumaro on Primeval Beginnings

Thus, through the primeval beginnings be distant and dim, yet by the ancient teachings do we know the time when the lands were conceived and the islands born; Though the origins be vague and indistinct, yet by relying upon the sages of antiquity do we perceive the age when the deities were born and man were made to stand.

Source: Yasumaro. 712 AD. Preface to the *Kojiki* (the *Record of Ancient Matters*, the oldest surviving manuscript in Japanese.) Translation by Donald J. Philippi, 1968. University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo.

Cicero on Becoming Adults

To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child.

Latin: *Nescire autem quid ante quam natus sis acciderit, id est semper esse puerum.*

Source: Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC). 55 BC. *Brutus*. George Lincoln Hendrickson, Harry Mortimer Hubbell, translators. 1971. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Virgil on Putting the Past Behind Us

Endure, and conquer! Jove will soon dispose

To future good our past and present woes.
With me, the rocks of Scylla you have tried;
Th' inhuman Cyclops and his den defied.
What greater ills hereafter can you bear?
Resume your courage and dismiss your care,
An hour will come, with pleasure to relate
Your sorrows past, as benefits of Fate.

Source: Virgil. 19 BC. *The Aeneid*. Translated by John Dryden.

Plutarch on the Finding Truth

So very difficult a matter it is to trace and find out the
truth of anything by history.

Source: Plutarch. ca. 46-120 AD. (from Dryden's translation of
Plutarch's Lives, edited and revised by A. H. Clough).

Ptahhotep

Be not arrogant because of that which you know; deal
with the ignorant as with the learned; for the barriers
of art are not closed, no artist being in possession of the
perfection to which he should aspire. But good words are
more difficult to find than the emerald, for it is by slaves
that that is discovered among the rocks of pegmatite.

Source: Ptahhotep. 6th Dynasty (2300 to 2150 BCE) Egypt. The
Instruction of Ptahhotep. Translated by Charles F. Horne. 1917. The
Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East, Vol. II: Egypt. Parke,
Austin, and Lipscomb: New York.

Confucius on Due Diligence

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious vir-
tue throughout the Kingdom, first ordered well their
own states. Wishing to order well their states, they first

regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.

Source: Confucius (551 – 479 B.C.). *The Great Learning*.

The Guanzi on Questioning the Present

Those who would question the present should investigate the past. Those who do not understand what is to come should look at what has gone before.

Source: *The Guanzi*. Chinese writings dated c. 5th to 1st century BC, collected during the first century AD.

Hypatia on Things that Lie Beyond

To understand the things that are at our door is the best preparation for understanding those things that lie beyond.

Source: Attributed to mathematician Hypatia of Alexandria.

4: THE POP CULTURE DIVIDE

Archaeologists do it in square holes.

Archaeology for the Public

Archaeologists reach out to the public in fitful bursts of activity, largely because we are occasionally burned for our efforts. Here are some responses to the wall that divides the archaeologist from the archaeological consumer.

Loren Eiseley on Utter Uselessness

The archaeologist, it is said, is a student of the artifact. That harsh, unlovely word, as sharply angled as a fist ax or a brick, denudes us of human sympathy. In the eye of the public we loom, I suppose, as slightly befuddled graybeards scavenging in grave heaps. We caw like crows over a bit of jade or a broken potsherd: we are eternally associated in the public mind with sharp-edged flints and broken statues. The utter uselessness of the past is somehow magnificently incorporated into our activities.

Source: Loren Eiseley. 1997. Paw marks and buried towns. in *The Night Country*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln.

Chapter 4: The Pop Culture Divide

Stephen Lekson on Pop Mythologies

Professor Henry Jones, Jr., perhaps the most influential archaeologist of our time, warned us: “We cannot afford to take mythology at face value.”

Source: Stephen H. Lekson. 1999. *The Chaco Meridian: Centers of Power in the Ancient Southwest*. Altamira Press, Walnut Creek, California.

Ronald Wright on the Fascination of Cannibalism

Societies that do not eat people are fascinated by those that do (or did).

Source: Ronald Wright. 1986. *On Fiji Islands*. Viking Press, New York.

E.B. White on Being Reader and Read

Reading is the work of the alert mind, is demanding, and under ideal conditions produces finally a sort of ecstasy. As in the sexual experience, there are never more than two persons present in the act of reading—the writer, who is the impregnator, and the reader, who is the respondent. This gives the experience of reading a sublimity and power unequalled in any other form of communication.

Source: E. B. White, The Future of Reading. *New Yorker* column collected in *The Second Tree from the Corner* (1954). Harper, New York.

Sarah Tarlow Negotiating the Currents

In representing the people of the past we will always need to negotiate between the Scylla of making them so utterly incomprehensible that we cannot even begin to say anything meaningful about them and the Charybdis

of rendering them as late-20th-century Europeans wearing wimples or furry bikinis.

Source: Sarah Tarlow. 2000. Emotion in Archaeology. *Current Anthropology* 41(5):713-746.

Jeremy Sabloff on Unrepentant Looters

Why should the best known “archaeologist” to the public be an unrepentant looter like Indiana Jones? Is he the role model we want for our profession? When I turn on the television to watch a show with archaeological content, why should I be more than likely to see Leonard Nimoy and the repeated use of the term mysterious?

It should be professional archaeologists routinely helping to write and perhaps even hosting many of the archaeology shows on television, not just—at best—popular science writers and Hollywood actors.

Source: Jeremy A. Sabloff. 1998 “Distinguished lecture in Archeology: Communication and the future of archaeology.” *American Anthropologist* 100(4):869-875.

William Marquardt on Unearthing Support

Archaeology is fascinating to people when it is communicated to them in plain language.

Source: William H. Marquardt. 1996. Unearthing support for archaeology, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

John Hoopes on the Future of the Past

There is every indication that the creation of content in archaeology and anthropology on museum Web sites will be driven primarily by the personal satisfaction of scholars who recognize the potential of the Internet and other digital tools to facilitate contributions to

greater knowledge. The Web provides a new and powerful medium by which an individual or small group can filter, process, and disseminate knowledge to a worldwide audience. This work will happen only as scholars and museum professionals apply to the digital universe the passion, dedication, and diligence with which they have approached the creation and management of museums for the past three centuries.

Source: Hoopes, John W. 1997 The future of the past: Archaeology and anthropology on the world wide web. *Archives and Museum Informatics* 11:87-105.

Kent Flannery on What the World Wants

[W]hat the world wants is for archeology to teach it something about humanity's past. The world doesn't want epistemology from us. They want to hear about Olduvai Gorge, and Stonehenge, and Machu Picchu. People are gradually becoming aware that their first three million years took place before written history, and they look to archaeology as the only science—the *only one*—with the power to uncover that past.

Source: Kent V. Flannery. 1982. The golden Marshalltown. *American Anthropologist* 84:265-278.

Edward Bruner on Interpreting Tourism

In postmodern writings, contemporary American tourist attractions tend to be described in ways that replicate elements of the theory of postmodernism, emphasizing the inauthentic constructed nature of the sites, their appeal to the masses, their imitation of the past, and their efforts to present a perfected version of themselves. This is a narrow and distorted view that fails to account for the

popularity and frequency of such sites on the American landscape, that begs the question of the meaning of the sites to the participants, and that by its denigration of popular American culture and mass tourist sites imposes an elitist politics blind to its own assumptions.

Source: Edward M. Bruner. 1994. Abraham Lincoln as authentic reproduction: A critique of postmodernism. *American Anthropologist* 96(2):397-415.

Bonnichsen and Steele on Peopling the Planet

To archaeologists world-wide, the most important attraction of the peopling of the Americas is that it probably represented one of the last steps in the colonization of the world by humans.

Source: Robson Bonnichsen and D. Gentry Steele. 1994. Introducing First Americans Research, In *Method and Theory for Investigating the Peopling of the Americas*, edited by Robson Bonnichsen and D. Gentry Steele, Center for the Study of the First Americans, Oregon State University, Corvallis.

Pop Culture Fights Back



While collecting quotations, I couldn't help but run into pop cultural references to the study of the past. When paired with concerns about making ourselves intelligible to the present, these comments are illuminating. Well, good for a laugh, anyway, however rueful.

Chapter 4: The Pop Culture Divide

Jane Austen (as Catherine Morland) on Real Solemn History

History, real solemn history, I cannot be interested in.

I read it a little as a duty, but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars or pestilences, in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all—it is very tiresome.

Source: Catherine Morland [Jane Austen]. 1803. *Northanger Abbey*.

Agatha Christie (as Amy Leatheran) on Messing About in Mesopotamia

I don't know anything about archaeology and I don't know that I very much want to. Messing about with people and places that are buried and done with doesn't make sense to me.

Source: Agatha Christie 2000 *Murder in Mesopotamia*. Bantam Books, New York.

Eddie Izzard on the Time Team

It's like archaeology, archaeology. That's a slow thing, isn't it? It can't be speeded up. Archaeology's got three bloody vowels in the middle! Arch-a-e-ology, I mean what the hell's going on there! Did someone just unload a bunch of vowels in the middle of it?

But the *Time Team*! We have the *Time Team* in Britain. Speed archaeology! Archaeologists on the drug speed. And that's what you want. Speed this thing along! Dig, Dig! Cause the normal stuff's kinda slow, then they say we've found stuff! Archaeologists, you found stuff? What have you found, what have you found? Well, give us a toothbrush and ten years and we'll tell you.

Source: Eddie Izzard 2003. Sexie.

The Archaeologist's Book of Quotations

The Ghostbusters on Matters Scientific

Back off, man! I'm a scientist!

Peter Venkman (Bill Murray). 1984. *Ghostbusters*. Writers: Dan Aykroyd, Harold Ramis, Rick Moranis

Davis S. Cohen (as The Simpsons' Principal Skinner) on the Pleasures of Archaeology Field Trip

Attention, all honor students will be rewarded with a trip to an archaeological dig. (cheering) Conversely, all detention students will be punished with a trip to an archaeological dig. (booing)

Source: Davis S. Cohen. 1997. *Lisa the Skeptic*. *The Simpsons*, episode aired November 23, 1997.

Paul Dehn and Pierre Boulle (as Cornelius in Planet of the Apes) on Being an Archaeologist

Dr. Lewis Dixon: Can you read a map?

Cornelius: I'm an archaeologist. I can even draw one!

Source: *Escape from the Planet of the Apes*. 1971. Screenplay by Paul Dehn and Pierre Boulle.

Henry David Thoreau on Ambitious Boobies

As for the Pyramids, there is nothing to wonder at in them so much as the fact that so many men could be found degraded enough to spend their lives constructing a tomb for some ambitious booby, whom it would have been wiser and manlier to have drowned in the Nile, and then given his body to the dogs.

Source: Henry David Thoreau. 1854. *Walden*.

Chapter 4: The Pop Culture Divide

George Lucas at Tikal

Aha! The Rebel Base!

Source: George Lucas may not have said exactly this, but he did use the view from Temple IV at Tikal as the image for the rebel base on Yavin 4 in 1977's *Star Wars*.

Henry David Thoreau on Unremarkable Histories

Most events recorded in history are more remarkable than important, like eclipses of the sun and moon, by which all are attracted, but whose effects no one takes the trouble to calculate.

Source: Henry David Thoreau. 1849. *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*.

T.R. Talbott on the Last Days of the Ice Man

Karem'a struggled up the last few feet of the sheer mountain trail, pausing to catch her breath before she staggered over to the ravine where Dunmkkn lay mortally wounded, while she gazed down on his recumbent form, never knowing that, in just about 5,000 years time, the remains of this hated body would be found by some intrepid hikers, causing a furious uproar, due to the proximity of two international borders, and she coiled up the thin, dirty-grey trip rope, tucking it away in her wolf-hide belt, satisfaction oozing from the dirt-encrusted pores of her body, and drying in a sweaty sheen, matting her hair even further, muttered softly to herself, though in truth, there was no one alive now to hear her words, "Take that, you bastard!"

Source: T. R. Talbott (of East Wenatchee, Washington). 1997. Contest Entry, 1997 Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest.

The Archaeologist's Book of Quotations

Walt Kelly (as Pogo) on Improved Views

Looking back, the view always improves.

Source: Pogo (Walt Kelly). 1970. *Impollutable Pogo*. Simon and Schuster, New York.

Christine Sullivan Recreating Indiana Jones

The woods held danger at every dark, haunting corner, and Indiana Jones decided it was too risky to continue; he had already been attacked by a mound of fire ants, had a brush with poison ivy, and faced a terrifying encounter with the Forest Ranger's vicious beagle, Muffin.

Source: Christine Sullivan, Melbourne, Florida. 1999. Winning entry in the Adventure Category of the 1999 Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest.

Groucho Marx (as Captain Spaulding) on the Greatest Contribution to Science

I've always had the idea that my retirement would be the greatest contribution to science the world has ever known.

Source: Captain Jeffrey T. Spaulding (Groucho Marx). 1930. *Animal Crackers*.

Green Day on Time's Direction

Time grabs you by the wrist, directs you where to go.

Source: Billie Joe Armstrong of Green Day. 1997. *Time of Your Life* (Good Riddance). Nimrod. Reprise Records.

Penelope Lively on Howling Landscapes

Alice... is thinking about this deceptive place, this tranquil vista. You are looking at mayhem, all over Wiltshire

and Dorset and Somerset, those calm green counties with their sleepy villages and the cricket pitches and the primary school playgrounds and the pubs with the hanging baskets that drip petunias and lobelia. Surface veneer, all of it. Dig a few feet and you are into bloodshed. The arrowheads and the axes and the swords and the daggers. The Stonehenge skeleton with the flint barb in its ribs and the bones at Maiden Castle, chopped about by sword blows, and the split skulls here at Cornbury Hill. This landscape is howling, if you listen.

Source: Penelope Lively. 2005. *Making it Up*. Viking Press, New York.

Eddie Izzard on Small Walls

And they always find in archeology a series of small walls. Every time, a series of small walls. Everywhere you go. "We've found a series of small walls, we're very excited! We think this proves they had walls in olden days. They were very small, and a series of small wall people."

And then someone comes along, very learned, with glasses and says: "Of course, the king and queen entertained here! 1,500 courtiers, and there were soldiers, 20,000 soldiers in this room, and elephants dancing hopscotch over there! A mad fiddler in this room, playing the banjo, viaducts and aqueducts into a heater!"

And you're just watching, and going, "You're making this up, mate! You just point at a series of small walls, and say, 'There, there! Tutankhamen playing banjo in there!'" Don't know if it's true.

Source: Eddie Izzard. 1997. *Glorious*.

The Archaeologist's Book of Quotations

Indiana Jones on Archaeology's Location

Archaeology is the search for fact. Not truth. If it's truth you're interested in, Doctor Tyree's Philosophy class is right down the hall. So forget any ideas you've got about lost cities, exotic travel, and digging up the world. We do not follow maps to buried treasure, and 'X' never, ever marks the spot. Seventy percent of all archaeology is done in the library. Research. Reading.

Source: Indiana Jones (Jeff Boam, George Lucas and Menno Meyjes). 1989. *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

Bob and Ray on Museum Etiquette

If you let a pack of dogs loose in a museum, they'll probably tamper with the fossils.

Source: Bob [Elliot] and Ray [Goulding], 1959. From Vintage Bob and Ray, Volume 1, Cassette 4, Side 1A the CBS Years. Published with permission.

Anonymous Critics at a Movie Theatre

Don't lean on the transit!

Source: A chorus of irritated archaeologists at the fourth (or fifth) viewing of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Bill Watterson Remarks on What Archaeologists Have Always Known

Archaeologists have the most mind-numbing job on the planet!

Source: Bill Watterson. 1988. *Calvin and Hobbes*.

5: ETHICS AND THE ARCHAEOLOGIST

Any knowledge is a
subset of archaeology

— Ned Heite

Ethical Dilemmas

Because we studiers of the past involve ourselves in everything having to do with human behavior, we face a never-ending spiral of ethical dilemmas. However we present the past, we impact the present, and even though our subjects are long dead, the repercussions are not, as we can become painfully aware.

Anubha Charan on Digging up Holy Places

How far are we prepared to go to right a wrong that might have been committed five centuries ago? Even if the Archaeological Survey of India's interpretation of Ayodhya is correct [that a Hindu temple once existed on the site of the Babri Masjid mosque], can it justify the razing of the mosque as a process of 'getting even with history'? Monuments all over the world have been built on top of demolished religious structures, whether animist, Buddhist, Jain, Hindu, Jewish, Christian, or Muslim. What if it is found that the Taj Mahal...belonged to that category?

Sources: Anubha Charan. 2004. Digging Up India's Holy Places. *History Today* 54(1):4-6.

John Chapman on Creating Cultural Targets

In a cultural war, the conquest of territories and the 'ethnic cleansing' of settlements is insufficient. Nothing less than the destruction of past historical identities is needed. If the identifies between past nations and their landscapes are best symbolized by their monuments, it is these monuments which have been prime targets in this cultural war. Mosques for Serbs and Croats, Orthodox churches for Muslims and Croats, Catholic monasteries for Serbs and Muslims—each monumental symbol fatally attracts the cultural warriors. Designation of a building for UNESCO protection marks out buildings for special destruction.... Halpern (1993) issues a barbed new challenge to students of material culture: the creation of an 'ethno-archaeology of architectural destruction.'

Source: John Chapman. 1994. Destruction of a common heritage: The archaeology of war in Croatia, Bosnia, and Hercegovina. *Antiquity* 68:120-126.

Clarice Stasz Stoll on Collective Forgetfulness

History as a discipline can be characterized as having a collective forgetfulness about women.

Source: Clarice Stasz Stoll. 1974. *Female & Male: Socialization, Social Roles, and Social Structure*. W. C. Brown Company Dubuque, Iowa.

Penelope Mary Allison on Androcentricity

Androcentric archaeology and anthropology are fundamentally political in supporting the oppression of women in the present by creating partial distorted constructions of cultures that represent male domination

and female subordination as universal, natural, and inevitable.

Source: Penelope Mary Allison. 1999. *The Archaeology of Household Activities: Dwelling in the Past*. Routledge, London.

Timothy Kaiser on Targets

The war [in the Balkans] today has been built upon historical falsehoods. Using first selective readings and misreadings of history to mobilize support, leaders in the conflict then offered up a version of the past as a blueprint for the future. In effect, each side saw the contested parts of Croatia, Bosnia, and Hercegovina as having once been ethnically unmixed and sought to restore that condition. Of course, nothing of the sort ever existed. However, since micro-regional ethnic homogeneity was the goal, and since what is determinative of ethnicity is history, it follows that history, or rather specific parts of the past as they exist in the present, must be eradicated. And that means that places intimately associated with another group's past—a minaret, a bridge, a hillfort—become important targets marked for destruction.

Source: Timothy Kaiser. 1994. Archaeology and ideology in south-east Europe. In *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, edited by Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Susan Crate on Climate Change and Advocacy

Research on climate change, the bulk of which to date is in the Arctic, does not address global climate change's cultural implications. Encounters with the cultural implications of Viliui Sakha [native horse and cattle

breeders inhabiting the Viliui regions of northeastern Siberia] communities' observations and perceptions of the local effects of global climate change reveal a need to develop research projects focusing on the cognitive/perceptual orientations of communities. Here, anthropologists can play a unique role.

We are trained as cultural interpreters, translators, advocates, educators, and mediators. Many of us already work in the various academic fields of global environmental change. We can use the tools of applied, public, and advocacy-oriented anthropology to work on behalf of our indigenous research partners.

Source: Susan A. Crate. 2008 Gone the Bull of Winter? Grappling with the Cultural Implications of and Anthropology's Role(s) in Global Climate Change. *Current Anthropology* 49(4):569-595.

Geoffrey Clark on NAGPRA's Fatal Flaw

...Kennewick Man underscores a fatal flaw in NAGPRA, which is predicated on the assumption that anthropologists can in fact identify prehistoric antecedents to extant identity-conscious social groups.... Anyone reasonably familiar with evolutionary biology would recognize immediately that they cannot do that reliably or consistently. Race and ethnicity are fleeting, transient things... There is no basis in science for thinking that present-day ethnic groups even existed as recently as 400 or 500 years ago, much less in a more remote time range.... Indian claims for ancient skeletal remains based on assertions of ethnic relationship, geographical proximity, or historical connection grounded in "pan-Indianness" are without foundation.

Source: Geoffrey A. Clark. 1999. NAGPRA, Science and the Demon Haunted World. *Skeptical Inquirer* May/June.

Zainab Bahrani on the Looting in Iraq

The pattern of destruction [at the Iraq National Museum] made it immediately clear to me that this was not a case of random desecration by an oppressed population taking revenge on a hated regime. Instead, the localized mutilization left no doubt that the looting of the museum involved a faction of professional antiquities thieves who knew exactly what kinds of objects to take, where to find them in the museum, and which ones would fetch the highest prices.

Source: Zainab Bahrani. 2004. Lawless in Mesopotamia. *Natural History* 113(2):44-49.

Christine Finn on Authenticity

This essay raises the issue of 'authentic' use of an ancient site [Chaco Canyon], and asks whether it is possible to discriminate one use as more worthy than another. Those within the Native American communities argue their right through inheritance or continued use. How might the more recent 20th century visitors, such as New Age followers, claim their right? Is their use, for ritual purposes, an expression of care and understanding? Or does it mark a lack of consideration for earlier claims on the site? Is it the site that is really the issue—or the significance of the landscape in which it sits?

Christine Finn, 1997 'Leaving more than footprints': Modern votive offerings at Chaco Canyon prehistoric site. *Antiquity* 71:177-178.

Steve Russell on the Repatriation Movement

The repatriation movement is an attempt to start at the bottom towards the goal of being recognized as living

human beings, who have children and relatives—and ancestors.

Source: Steve Russell. 1997. The Roots of NAGPRA. <http://archaeology.about.com/cs/ethicsandlaw/a/russell.htm> Downloaded August 4, 2009.

Heinrich Harke on Political Influences

The various and changing attitudes of archaeologists towards migrations and ethnicity demonstrate the value of, and indeed the necessity for, constant critical examination of our own views on politically sensitive issues. At stake is not just our claim to carry out unbiased research and to engage in open-minded, unprejudiced debate but also our claim not to provide direct support for partisan political positions and our desire to be free in our work from political interference and pressure.

Source: Heinrich Harke. 1998. Archaeologists and migrations: A problem of attitude? *Current Anthropology* 39(1):19-45.

Bettina Arnold on Heinrich Harke

I am not sure, however, what conclusions to draw from [Harke's] "desire to be free in our work from political interference and pressure." Does this mean that research results that clearly could be appropriated by "partisan political" forces should not be published until the political climate has changed? Isn't all research potentially vulnerable to misuse once it has entered the public domain? How will anticipating such abuses by policing research results make us more "free in our work"? ... Where do we as researchers draw the line?

Bettina Arnold in Heinrich Harke. 1998. Archaeologists and migrations: A problem of attitude? *Current Anthropology* 39(1):19-45.

Religion vs. Science



If archaeology is not a science, then why do we keep having to fight off religion?

Bettinger on Business Costs

Science, and especially archaeology, is always going to be plagued by crackpots and crackpot hypotheses. That's because science makes room—in essence, provides a 'niche'—for any hypothesis, no matter how silly. Indeed, it is progress in knowledge, evidence, and understanding that separates plausible hypotheses from the silly ones, which are simply abandoned and pass from scientific consciousness. Paradoxically, as research and thinking moves further and further from the silly hypothesis in pursuit of more plausible ones, the more the silly hypothesis has the potential for passing as 'innovative' thought, simply because most scientists are not thinking that way anymore (almost always for good reason). This is why exponents of silly, long-discarded hypotheses are often portrayed in the public media as creative innovators willing to buck the establishment. Thus, the more archaeology progresses in its pursuit of plausible hypotheses, the more it invites challenges from the lunatic fringe.

It's just a cost of doing business.

Source: Robert Bettinger, unpublished Society for American Archaeology paper, 1998.

Barry L. Whitney on Disproving God

It is important to note that science, unlike scientism, should not be a threat to religious belief. Science, to be sure, advocates a “naturalistic” rather than a “super-naturalistic” focus, and an empirical verification method for determining truths about the physical world and the universe. Yet the proper mandate of science is restricted to the investigation of the natural (physical, empirical) dimension of reality. It is this restriction that scientism has violated, replacing proper science with an illicit ideology that not only seeks to explain all things naturalistically, but assumes—without proof—that the spiritual realm is irrelevant, indeed non-existent.

Source: Barry L. Whitney. 2006 Has Science disproved God? In John Ashton, Michael Westacott (eds), *The Big Argument: Twenty-Four Scholars Explore How Science, Archaeology, and Philosophy Haven't Disproved God*. New Leaf Publishing Group, Portland, Oregon.

Leonard Louis Levinson (attributed) on Short Trudges

History is the short trudge from Adam to atom.

Source: Attributed to Leonard Louis Levinson.

Kathleen Kenyon on Biblical accuracy

Palestinian archaeology has suffered to some extent in the past from a too exclusive association with the Bible. We should have obtained a far truer picture if in the last fifty years excavators had been able to visualize the life of the country as part of a whole, and not primarily as a means of proving Biblical accuracy.

Source: Kathleen Kenyon. 1944. *Conference on the Future of Archaeology*. Occasional Paper 5 University of London Institute of Archaeology.

Roeliff Brinkerhoff on the Gospel of Nature

The gospel of nature is a thing of the senses. It can be seen and felt and handled and tasted. It cannot be interpolated by deceitful or designing men to an extent beyond detection, and therefore, if the gospel of Nature comes in conflict with the gospel of Revelation, the latter must go to the wall. It is inevitably so in the nature of things.

Source: Roeliff Brinkerhoff. 1900 *Recollections of a Lifetime*. Robert Clarke Company, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Kenneth Weiss on Putting Ourselves on Trial

Our understanding of evolution is dynamic, approximate, and always changing. Even in a culture war, we should be on guard to keep it that way. We should not allow ourselves to respond in kind by being bullied into insisting on a too neatly packaged or simplistic, much less dogmatic view, even though expressing uncertainties about our knowledge provides food for our opponents. If our science is to remain healthy, we should always be putting ourselves on trial.

Source: Weiss, Kenneth M. 2007 The Scopes trial. *Evolutionary Anthropology* 16(4):126-131.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. on Being Decently Humanized

You inherit your notions from a set of priests that had no wives and no children, or none to speak of, and so let their humanity die out of them. It didn't seem much to them to condemn a few thousand millions of people to purgatory or worse for a mistake of judgment. They didn't know what it was to have a child look up in their

faces and say 'Father!' It will take you a hundred or two more years to get decently humanized, after so many centuries of de-humanizing celibacy.

Source: Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. 1859. *Elsie Venner*, Chapter XXII: Why Doctors Differ.

Stephen J. Gould on the Need for Miracles

The argument that the literal story of Genesis can qualify as science collapses on three major grounds:

- ☛ The creationists' need to invoke miracles in order to compress the events of the earth's history into the biblical span of a few thousand years;
- ☛ their unwillingness to abandon claims clearly disproved, including the assertion that all fossils are products of Noah's flood; and
- ☛ their reliance upon distortion, misquote, half-quote, and citation out of context to characterize the ideas of their opponents

Stephen J. Gould. 1987/1988. The Verdict on Creationism. *The Skeptical Inquirer* Winter 87/88.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generation beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs?

Source: Ralph Waldo Emerson. 1836. *Nature*.

Who Owns the Past?



A central debate in archaeology and history both is that although we are the designated practitioners of uncovering the historical past, what we discover doesn't actually belong to us.

Inga Clendinning: In a free society, everyone

Who owns the past? In a free society, everyone. It is a magic pudding belonging to anyone who wants to cut themselves a slice, from legend-manufacturers through novelists looking for ready-made plots, to interest groups out to extend their influence.

Source: Inga Clendinning. 2006. The History Question: Who owns the past? *Quarterly Essay* 23: 1-72

George Orwell: Whoever Controls the Present

Who controls the past controls the future: Who controls the present controls the past.

George Orwell. 1949. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Harcourt, Brace, New York

Nicholas and Bannister: Better Question: Who owns the future?

Who owns the future?... It can be argued that whoever owns (or controls records of) the past also owns or otherwise shapes the future of that past.... We advocate a more active role for archaeologists working with Indigenous peoples (or on Indigenous territories) in considering the implications of their research. We believe that solutions

to disputes between archaeologists (or archaeology) and tribes will be found in the recognition of what archaeological knowledge means and what control of that knowledge means beyond simply economics or professional rewards and advancement. There must be recognition of ethical obligations at both the individual and collective level. Adopting participatory research approaches, supporting meaningful collaboration with Indigenous colleagues, sharing decision-making responsibilities and benefits in research processes and outcomes, and working cooperatively with all those who have an interest in Indigenous cultural heritage will be a key to identifying, understanding, and addressing the conflicts that may arise in claiming ownership of the past.

Source: George P. Nicholas and Kelly P. Bannister. 2004. Copyrighting the Past? Emerging Intellectual Property Rights Issues in Archaeology. *Current Anthropology* 45(3):327-350.

Brian Fagan: No one owns the past

To archaeologists, the human past is owned by no one. It represents the cultural heritage of everyone who has ever lived on Earth or will live on it in the future. Archaeology puts all human societies on an equal footing.

Source: Brian Fagan. 1996. Introduction to the *Oxford Companion to Archaeology*. Oxford University Press, London.

John C. Raveslout: Archaeologists do, but that's not necessarily a good thing

While I know many archaeologists who would argue that no one owns the past, the reality is that our profession has spent more than 100 years studying someone

else's cultural past. As archaeologists, we must recognize and acknowledge the fact that, despite all of the significant contributions that our profession has made to an understanding of North American prehistory, we have not done a very good job of communicating with and involving the descendants of the past societies we are studying.

John C. Ravesloot. 1997. Changing Native American Perceptions of Archaeology. In *Native Americans and Archaeologists: Stepping Stones to Common Ground*. Edited by Nina Swidler. AltaMira, Walnut Creek, California.

Phyllis Mauch Messenger: Three alternative answers

Three sorts of alternative and competing answers are given [to "Who owns the past"]: (1) "Everyone owns the past," since the past is the common heritage of all; it is "humanity's past;" (2) "Some specific group (e.g., indigenous peoples, scholars, collectors, museums, nations) owns the past," since that group speaks for or represents the important values that are at stake in the debate over cultural properties; and (3) "No one owns the past," since the past is not really the sort of thing that is ownable. ...[T]hese three sorts of answers reflect competing philosophical positions about the ownership of "cultural property," understood here in the widest sense to include both physical remains of the past and "perceptions of the past itself."

Source: Phyllis Mauch Messenger. 1999. *The ethics of collecting cultural property: whose culture? whose property?* University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Rebecca Tsosie: Maybe no one, but the responsibility must be shared

Perhaps no one can really “own” the past, but we need to acknowledge the special responsibilities of those Native American people who are caretakers of an ancestral past that lives on.

Rebecca Tsosie. 1997. Indigenous Rights and Archaeology. In *Native Americans and Archaeologists: Stepping Stones to Common Ground*. Edited by Nina Swidler. AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek, California.

Carmichael and Herbert: the Maori must own their own

Who owns the past? This apparently simple question is central to the issue of [Maori] waahi tapu protection... The past for Maori people is not just a heritage resource. To those Maori immersed in it, it is a spiritual resource, whose ‘use’ involves prescribed procedures. The past is viewed as part of the ‘living present’. This is at odds with the view that there is a firm line between the past and the present, and which often results in the relinquishing of obligations to the past in favour of the present. ... The Maori past exists only in this country, it only has relevance to this land and therefore the Maori people lose everything if their past is not protected.

Source: David L. Carmichael and Jane Hubert. 1994. *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*. Routledge, London.

McIntosh, McIntosh and Togola: An emotional question

The issue of who owns the past is an emotional one, having as much to do with the politics of the present as the conservation of the past. ... As archaeologists become increasingly concerned about hidden political and ideological agendas in their quest for the past, the way they

recover, interpret, and conserve the past is changing. The nature of archaeology in the twenty-first century depends on the outcome of debates currently raging in the discipline, as “people without history” strive to reclaim their pasts.

Source: Roderick J. McIntosh, Susan Keech McIntosh, and Teres Togola. 2006. People without history. *Archaeological Ethics*. edited by Karen D. Vitelli and John Stephen Colwell-Chanthaphonh. AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek, California.

Gathercole and Lowenthal: The present does

In answer to the question, “Who owns the past?” the recognition of a site as “archaeological” may in fact indicate that the past no longer belongs to itself but to the present.

Source: P. W. Gathercole and David Lowenthal. 1990. *The Politics of the Past*. Unwin-Hyman, London.

Dever and Gitin: Nobody should

Who “owns” the past? Only those who attempt to appropriate it on its own terms, for whatever timeless and universal lessons it may have to teach us. And if our reconstruction of the past is too biased by our own modern concerns, then it may become a monstrous caricature that can only lead us into nationalist nightmares and unimaginable tragedies. ... Vigilance is in order. We must seek to construct and tolerate “multiple pasts”, none of them perfect reflections of reality.

Source: William G. Dever, Seymour Gitin. 2003. *Symbiosis, Symbolism, And The Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age Through Roman Palaestina*. Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Indiana.

Heinrich Himmler: I do.

The one and only thing that matters to us, and the thing these people are paid for by the state, is to have ideas of history that strengthen our people in their necessary national pride. In all this troublesome business we are only interested in one thing—to project into the dim and distant past the picture of our nation as we envisage it for the future.

Every bit of Tacitus in his Germania is tendentious stuff. Our teaching of German origins has depended for centuries on falsification. We are entitled to impose one of our own at any time.

Source: Heinrich Himmler, quoted in Bettina Arnold, *The Past as Propaganda*, *Archaeology* July/August 1992:33.

6: DEEPER EXCAVATIONS

Love is fleeting
Stone tools are forever

Cosmic Reflections

Most archaeologists, I daresay, would prefer to keep our cosmic reflections on what it means to be human to ourselves. But, since what it means to be human concerns all of us, the ideas leak out in convenient, or inconvenient, moments.

G. M. Trevelyan on Vanishing Generations

The poetry of history lies in the quasi-miraculous fact that once, on this earth, on this familiar spot of ground, walked other men and women, as actual as we are today, thinking their own thoughts, swayed by their own passions, but now all gone, one generation vanishing after another, gone as utterly as we ourselves shall shortly be gone like ghosts at cock-crow.

Source: George Macaulay Trevelyan. 1949. *Autobiography of an Historian*. In *An Autobiography & Other Essays*. Longmans, Green, London.

Einstein on Persistent Illusions

People like us, who believe in physics, know that the

distinction between past, present, and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion.

Albert Einstein. As quoted in Stephen Hawking. 2007. *A Stubbornly Persistent Illusion: The Essential Scientific Works of Albert Einstein*. Running Press, Philadelphia.

Anonymous on Feature Life

Everyone is destined to become a feature.

Source: Anonymous.

Steven Faulkner on Dead Pasts

William Faulkner once wrote, "The past is not dead; it is not even past." This is true, though occasionally the past needs a little mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to get the old boy wheezing again.

Source: Steven Faulkner. 2007. *Waterwalk: A Passage of Ghosts*. RDR Books, Muskegon, Michigan.

E.B. Tylor on Complex Networks

Progress, degradation, survival, revival, modification, are all modes of the connexion that binds together the complex network of civilization. It needs but a glance into the trivial details of our own daily life to set us thinking how far we are really its originators, and how far but the transmitters and modifiers of the results of long past ages.

Source: Edward Burnett Tylor. 1889. *Primitive Culture: Researches Into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*. Reprint 1970. P. Smith, Gloucester, Massachusetts.

Chapter 6: Deeper Excavations

Arthur Koestler on Unknown Organs

The evolution of the brain not only overshot the needs of prehistoric man, it is the only example of evolution providing a species with an organ with it does not know how to use: a luxury organ, which will take its owner thousands of years to put to good use—if s/he ever does.

Source: Arthur Koestler. 1967. *The Ghost in the Machine*. Hutchinson, London.

Howard Winters on the Meaning of Civilization

Civilization is the process in which one gradually increases the number of people included in the term ‘we’ or ‘us’ and at the same time decreases those labeled ‘you’ or ‘them’ until that category has no one left in it.

Source: Howard Winters, as quoted by Anne-Marie Cantwell, in “Howard Dalton Winters: In Memoriam.” Unpublished paper, 1994. Midwest Archaeological Conference, Lexington, Kentucky.

Alfred North Whitehead on Advancing Civilizations

Civilization advances by extending the number of important operations which we can perform without thinking about them.

Source: Alfred North Whitehead. 1911. *An Introduction to Mathematics*. H. Holt and Company, New York.

John Steinbeck on Finding Answers

The literature of science is filled with answers found when the question propounded had an entirely different direction and end.

Source: John Steinbeck. 1951. *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*, with Edward Ricketts. Viking Press, New York.

Kate Wilhelm on Using the Past

You can accept the past and examine it, use what is valuable from it; or you can return to it to suffer again and again in whatever misery you've already had; or you can forget it, and be ruled by it in ways you'll never understand.

Source: Kate Wilhelm. 1979. *Juniper Time*. Harper and Row, New York.

Carl Sagan on the Library at Alexandria

History is full of people who out of fear, or ignorance, or lust for power have destroyed knowledge of immeasurable value which truly belongs to us all. We must not let it happen again.

Source: Carl Sagan (referring to the loss of the Library at Alexandria). 1988. *Cosmos*.

Friedrich Nietzsche on Cruelty and Festivals

Without cruelty there is no festival: thus the longest and most ancient part of human history teaches—and in punishment there is so much that is festive.

Source: Friedrich Nietzsche. 1887. Second Essay, Section 6. *On the Genealogy of Morals*.

Lord and Turekian on the Diplomacy of Science

It is time for the scientific community to increase its role in diplomacy—and maybe even take the lead. Nongovernmental scientific organizations are more credible, more nimble, and—as honest brokers—in many cases more respected than the U.S. government overseas. They work at the grassroots level on global

problems such as energy, clean water, and health. A vigorous new science diplomacy, oriented to foreign citizens as well as their governments, will promote human well-being, will benefit science, and will catalyze public diplomacy. Our country needs a new era of science diplomacy, and we need the commitment of the U.S. science community behind it.

Source: Kristin M. Lord and Vaughan C. Turekian. 2007. Time for a New Era of Science Diplomacy. *Science* 315:769-770.

Robert Heinlein on Specialization

A human being should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, conn a ship, design a building, write a sonnet, balance accounts, build a wall, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, cooperate, act alone, solve equations, analyze a new problem, pitch manure, program a computer, cook a tasty meal, fight efficiently, die gallantly.

Specialization is for insects.

Source: Robert Heinlein. 1973. *Time Enough For Love*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

Will and Ariel Durant on Fluid Forms

At any moment a comet may come too close to the earth and set our little globe turning topsy-turvy in a hectic course, or choke its men and fleas with fumes or heat; or a fragment of the smiling sun may slip off tangentially—as some think our planet did a few astronomic moments ago—and fall upon us in a wild embrace ending all grief and pain. We accept these possibilities in our stride, and retort to the cosmos in the words of Pascal: ‘When the

universe has crushed him man will still be nobler than that which kills him, because he knows that he is dying, and of its victory the universe knows nothing.'

To the geologic eye all the surface of the earth is a fluid form, and man moves upon it as insecurely as Peter walking on the waves to Christ.

Source: Will and Ariel Durant. 1968. *Lessons of History*. Simon and Schuster, New York..

Albert Einstein on the Religious Experience of Science

I maintain that the cosmic religious feeling is the strongest and noblest motive for scientific research. Only those who realize the immense efforts and, above all, the devotion without which pioneer work in theoretical science cannot be achieved are able to grasp the strength of the emotion out of which alone such work, remote as it is from the immediate realities of life, can issue. What a deep conviction of the rationality of the universe and what a yearning to understand, were it but a feeble reflection of the mind revealed in this world, Kepler and Newton must have had to enable them to spend years of solitary labor in disentangling the principles of celestial mechanics!

Source: Albert Einstein. 1930. *New York Times Magazine*, November 9, 1930.

Constructing the Past



While archaeologists and historians have come to recognize that we do in fact create the past, this confers upon us specific obligations that we mull over mulled wine. Or gin and tonics.

Douglas K. Charles on Shades of the Past

Archeologists are ... coming to appreciate that there are different pasts that can be (re)constructed. Anglo-American archeology has been largely defined within a male-oriented and capitalist society, but alternative interpretations are emerging ... [N]o-one seems yet to have escaped from the various dimensions that define Western thought. We are either a Romantic, or we are Enlightened. We see structure, or we see process. We believe in progress or a steady state, internal or external causality, gradual or abrupt change. The history of archeology consists of the reworking of these and related themes. Perhaps it is time to step back—or, rather, step down—and admit that none of us has a privileged perspective. We simply wear different shades.

Source: Douglas K. Charles. 1992. Shading the past, *American Anthropologist* 94(4):905-925.

Ronald J. Mason on Fainter Footfalls

Who has knowingly trudged along ancient beach lines and not caught an echo of muffled, lingering thunder

where breezes sigh amid grass and trees far from present shores? (And heard another's fainter footfall in a brief respite between successions of breakers.) We need not be committed to mysticism to sense ghosts recalled by lonely wind and scudding clouds at a Barnes or Potts site. We can imagine them wondering with us at the individual's claim on the tenacity of life.

Source: Ronald J. Mason. 1981. *Great Lakes Archaeology*.

Cormac McCarthy on Naming the World

The world has no name. The names of the cerros and the sierras and the deserts exist only on maps. We name them that we do not lose our way. Yet it was because the way was lost to us already that we have made those names.

Source: Cormac McCarthy. 1994. *The Crossing*. A.A. Knopf, New York.

Mortimer Wheeler on Dead Archaeology

Dead archaeology is the driest dust that blows.

Source: Mortimer Wheeler, 1954. *Archaeology from the Earth*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, England.

Laurence Sterne on Confounded Hindrances

When a man sits down to write a history—tho' it be but the history of Jack Hickathrift or Tom Thumb—he knows no more than his heels what lets and confounded hindrances he is to meet in his way—or what a dance he may be led, by one excursion or another, before all is over.

Source: Laurence Sterne. 1894. *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*.

Chapter 6: Deeper Excavations

David Lowenthal on Foreign Countries

The past remains integral to us all, individually and collectively. We must concede the ancients their place... But their place is not simply back there, in a separate and foreign country; it is assimilated in ourselves, and resurrected into an ever-changing present.

Source: David Lowenthal. 1985. *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

James Russell Lowell on the Mythic Instinct

The actors in great affairs are seldom to be depended on as witnesses, either to the order of events or their bearing upon results; for even where selfish interest is not to be taken into account, the mythic instinct ere long begins to shape things as they ought to have been, rather than as they were.

Source: James Russell Lowell. 1864. The Rebellion: Its causes and consequences. In *The Writings of James Russell Lowell*, edited by Charles Eliot Norton. Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1890.

Truman Capote and John Huston (as Julius O'Hara in *Beat the Devil*) on Time

Time. Time. What is time? Swiss manufacture it. French hoard it. Italians squander it. Americans say it is money. Hindus say it does not exist. Do you know what I say? I say time is a crook.

Source: Julius O'Hara (Peter Lorre). 1953. *Beat the Devil*. Truman Capote and John Huston, screenwriters.

Anthony F.C. Wallace Locates the "Now"

I think it's important to always bear in mind that life occurs in historical time. Everyone in every culture lives

in some sort of historical time, though it might not be perceived in the same way an outside observer sees it. It's an interesting question, "When is Now?" "Now" can be drawn from some point like this hour, this day, this month, this lifetime, or this generation. "Now" can also have occurred centuries ago; things like unfair treaties, the Trail of Tears, and the Black Hawk War, for instance, remain part of the "Now" from which many Native Americans view their place in time today. Human beings respond today to people and events that actually occurred hundreds or even thousands of years ago.

Ethnohistorians have played a major role in showing how Now is a social concept of time, and that time is part of all social life. I can only hope that their work will further the understanding that the study of social life is a study of change over time.

Source: Anthony F. C. Wallace. 1998. In An Interview with Anthony F. C. Wallace, by Robert S. Grumet. *Ethnohistory* 45(1):127.

Bruce Trigger on Multiple Viewpoints

Archaeologists can never be sure that a particular interpretation is correct, still less that it can never be improved. Yet today they are asking more questions than ever before, have more techniques to analyze data than ever before, and are increasingly aware of their biases and try to compensate for them. A growing awareness of the role that such biases play in the interpretation of archaeological data, and in the practice of archaeology, is a development that all archaeologists should welcome.

But multiple standpoints do not simply create multiple, incompatible archaeologies. They challenge all

archaeologists, wherever possible, to use this multiplicity to create more holistic and objective syntheses.

Their goal should be an archaeology that is more complete and less biased because it is informed by an ever-increasing number of viewpoints and constrained by more data.

Source: Bruce Trigger. 1998. Archaeology and Epistemology: Dialoguing across the Darwinian chasm. *American Journal of Archaeology* 102:1-34.

Paul Grobstein on Being Progressively Less Wrong

In an enormous variety of distinct fields of inquiry the same general pattern is becoming clear: there is no such thing as “right,” the very concept needs to be replaced with “progressively less wrong.” The difference is far from semantic. “Right” is measured by proximity to some fixed idea, “progressively less wrong” by how far people have gotten from where they started. It is the aspiration to be “right” that leads to rigid hierarchical social organizations of all kinds, including educational systems. Wanting to be “progressively less wrong” takes one (and societies) in quite different directions entirely: it encourages life-long inquiry by every individual, a respect for past wisdom and enthusiasm for contributing to future understanding, and an appreciation of the enormous value of interactions between unique individuals each of whom has unique perspectives to contribute.

Paul Grobstein. 1993. Letter to John Bemis, Published on the *Serendip* website. http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/sci_cult/truth.html. Downloaded August 3, 2009.

Michael Goodchild on Maintaining Intellectual Depth

Disciplines inevitably tend to look inward, to drag their practitioners into a narrower and narrower focus, often at the expense of connection with the outside world. This is a fundamental problem with academe: How do we avoid our work becoming more and more abstract, more and more esoteric and yet, at the same time, not sacrifice quality and intellectual depth?

Source: Michael Goodchild. 1999. An interview with Michael Goodchild, by Nadine Shuurman. January 6, 1998, Santa Barbara, California. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 17:3-15.

Foley and Lahr on What's in Our Heads

Culture is the jam in the sandwich of anthropology. It is all-pervasive. It is used to distinguish humans from apes ("everything that man does that the monkeys do not" (Lord Ragland)) and to characterize evolutionarily derived behaviors in both living apes and humans. It is often both the explanation of what it is that has made human evolution different and what it is that it is necessary to explain. ... It exists in the heads of humans and is manifested in the products of actions. ... [C]ulture is seen by some as the equivalent of the gene, and hence a particulate unit (the meme) that can be added together in endless permutations and combinations, while to others it is as a large and indivisible whole that it takes on its significance.

In other words, culture is everything to anthropology, and it could be argued that in the process it has also become nothing.

Source: Robert Foley and Marta Mirazon Lahr. 2003. "On Stony Ground: Lithic Technology, Human Evolution, and the Emergence of Culture." *Evolutionary Archaeology* 12:109-122.

Chapter 6: Deeper Excavations

Lars Fogelin on too much faith

It is possible to think yourself into the past; you just cannot have too much faith in your conclusions.

Source: Lars Fogelin. 2006. *Archaeology of Early Buddhism*. Altamira Press, Walnut Creek, California.

Robert A. Dodgshon on the End of Time

No matter what sources of evidence are used to define the past—archaeological, ethnographic, documentary, published, oral, etc—they constitute traces of the past that have survived into the present so that our appreciation of what is past is always contemporary with ourselves. In this sense, our appreciation of the past is simply part of how we classify what is in the present....

Until it can be established that our sense of what is past is qualitatively different from our sense of what is in the present, and are not merely parts of the same classificatory scheme, then the past will survive in us and in our constructions of space whether we like it or not.

Source: Robert A. Dodgshon. 1999. Human geography at the end of time? Some thoughts on the notion of time-space compression. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 17:607-620.

Reconciling Past, Present and Future



As a literary device, the past often finds itself intimately paired with the present and future. Perhaps it might complain, if it weren't already dead.

Ralph Waldo Emerson on Genius

The book, the college, the school of art, the institution of any kind, stop with some past utterance of genius. This is good, say they,—let us hold by this. They pin me down. They look backward and not forward. But genius always looks forward. The eyes of man are set in his forehead, not in his hindhead. Man hopes. Genius creates. To create,—to create,—is the proof of a divine presence.

Source: Ralph Waldo Emerson. 1837. *The American Scholar*.

Magritte on Mediocrity

The present reeks of mediocrity and the atom bomb.

Source: René Magritte. Quoted in Suzi Gablik's 1970 biography, *Magritte*. Thames and Hudson, London.

Mary Webb on the Past

We are tomorrow's past.

Source: Mary Webb. 1924. Foreword to *Precious Bane*. Jonathan Cape Limited, London.

Robert Heinlein on Ignoring History

A generation which ignores its history has no past and no future.

Source: Robert Heinlein. 1973. *The Notebooks of Lazarus Long*. Putnam, New York.

Edward Hallett Carr on History's Dialogue

History is ... a dialogue between the present and the past.
Geschichte ist ... ein Dialog zwischen Gegenwart und Vergangenheit.

Source: Edward Hallet Carr. 1961. *What Is History?* Vintage Books, New York.

Chapter 6: Deeper Excavations

Hermann Melville on the Textbook of the Tyrants

The Past is dead, and has no resurrection; but the Future is endowed with such a life, that it lives to us even in anticipation. The Past is, in many things, the foe of mankind; the Future is, in all things, our friend. In the Past is no hope; The Future is both hope and fruition. The Past is the text-book of tyrants; the Future is the Bible of the Free. Those who are solely governed by the Past stand like Lot's wife, crystallized in the act of looking backward, and forever incapable of looking before.

Source: Herman Melville. 1850. White-Jacket, ch. 36, *The Writings of Herman Melville*, vol. 5, eds. Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle (published 1969).

Frederick Douglass Making Use of the Past

We have to do with the past only as we can make it useful to the present and the future.

Source: Frederick Douglass. 1845. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave: An American Slave*. Written by himself.

Lewis Carroll on Running Fast

"Well in our country," said Alice, still panting a little, "you'd generally get to somewhere else—if you ran very fast for a long time, as we've been doing."

"A slow sort of country!" said the Queen. "Now here, you see, it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

Source: Lewis Carroll. 1898. *Through the Looking Glass*.

Arthur Schlesinger Jr. on History's Effect on the Future

Science and Technology revolutionize our lives, but memory, tradition and myth frame our response. Expelled from individual consciousness by the rush of change, history finds its revenge by stamping the collective unconscious with habits, values, expectations, dreams. The dialectic between past and future will continue to form our lives.

Source: Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. 1986. "The Challenge of Change," in *New York Times Magazine*. July 27.

Maya Elder on Past Teachings

Don't forget the teachings of the ancestors. In their paths we will find hope for the future.

Source: Maya elder, speaking of the need to maintain Mayan ethnicity in the face of the conflict in Guatemala. Quoted in Victor D. Montejo (1997), "The Pan-Mayan Movement, Mayans at the doorway of the new millennium." *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 21(2):28.

Tommaso Marinetti on Gloomy Prevaricators

The past is necessarily inferior to the future. That is how we wish it to be. How could we acknowledge any merit in our most dangerous enemy: the past, gloomy prevaricator, execrable tutor?

Source: Tommaso Marinetti. 1915. War, the World's Only Hygiene In *Marinetti: Selected Writings*, ed. R.W. Flint (reprinted 1972). Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York.

Glyn Daniel on Laughter

The problem in archaeology is when to stop laughing.

Source: Glyn Daniel. 1961. Editorial. *Antiquity* 36:62-64.

Chapter 6: Deeper Excavations

Claude Levi-Strauss on Underrating the Past

Enthusiastic partisans of the idea of progress are in danger of failing to recognize... the immense riches accumulated by the human race.... By underrating the achievements of the past, they devalue all those which still remain to be accomplished.

Source: Claude Levi-Strauss. 1955. *Tristes Tropiques*. Translated by John and Doreen Weightman, 1974. Atheneum, New York.

Shirley Jackson on Historical Precedents

"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live that way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns.

"There's always been a lottery," he added petulantly.

Source: Shirley Jackson. 1948. *The Lottery*. 2000 Reprint. Modern Library, New York.

Patrick Henry on Lamps

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know no way of judging of the future but by the past.

Source: Patrick Henry. Speech at the Virginia convention, March 1775.

William Least Heat Moon on Yesterday

What you've done becomes the judge of what you're going to do, especially in other people's minds. When you're traveling, you are what you are. People don't have your past to hold against you. No yesterdays on the road.

Source: William Least Heat Moon. 1983. *Blue Highways: A Journey into America*. Brown, Boston.

Henry Ford on Bunks

History is more or less bunk. It's tradition. We don't want tradition. We want to live in the present, and the only history that is worth a tinker's damn is the history that we make today.

Source: Henry Ford. 1916. *Chicago Tribune*.

Ralph Waldo Emerson on Barbarous Societies

We think our civilization near its meridian, but we are yet only at the cock-crowing and the morning star. In our barbarous society the influence of character is in its infancy.

Source: Ralph Waldo Emerson. 1844. *Essays: Second Series*.

G. K. Chesterton on What's Wrong with the World

History does not consist of completed and crumbling ruins; rather it consists of a half-built villa abandoned by a bankrupt builder. This world is more like an unfinished suburb than a deserted cemetery.

Source: G. K. Chesterton. 1910. *What's Wrong with the World*. Dodd Mead, New York.

John Ruskin Laying Stone on Stone

Every human action gains in honour, in grace, in all true magnificence, by its regard to things that are to come....

Therefore, when we build, let us think that we build for ever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labour and wrought substance of them, "See! this our fathers did for us."

Source: John Ruskin. 1849. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. John Wiley, New York.

J. G. Ballard's Suburb of the Soul

I would sum up my fear about the future in one word: boring. And that's my one fear: that everything has happened; nothing exciting or new or interesting is ever going to happen again... the future is just going to be a vast, conforming suburb of the soul.

Source: J. G. Ballard. 1982 in *Re/Search* 8/9.

Keith Bassett on Cyberspace Democracies

....[T]he rapid development of the new media and computer technologies...have the potential to transform the very nature of the public sphere and open up new channels of communication to a proliferation of new voices. The public intellectual of today must now be much more alive to the possibilities for participating in what could become a new "cyberspace democracy"—an expanded

public sphere which is less academic and less elitist, and demands the use of more accessible forms of language and discourse than those which intellectuals have become used to.

Source: Keith Bassett. 1996. Postmodernism and the crisis of the intellectual. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 14:507-527.

John Berger, Orphaned in the Present

Post-modernism has cut off the present from all futures. The daily media add to this by cutting off the past. Which means that critical opinion is often orphaned in the present.

Source: John Berger. 1991. *Keeping a Rendezvous*. Pantheon Books, New York.

Henri Louis Bergson on Present Effects and Past Causes

The present contains nothing more than the past, and what is found in the effect was already in the cause.

Source: Henri Louis Bergson. 1907. *Creative Evolution*. Translated by Arthur Mitchell, 1911. H. Holt and Company, New York.

Seeking Truth



This last collection of quotes is a threading together of scholars who see the broader picture, those that seem to understand that the shards we assemble have more weight than can show up on a scale.

Chapter 6: Deeper Excavations

Robert McGhee on Central Purposes

The central purpose of archaeology... is the increase of knowledge regarding human history.

Source: Robert McGhee. 2008. Aboriginalism and the Problems of Indigenous Archaeology. *American Antiquity* 73(4):579-598.

Kenneth Weiss Finding Hybrids

In politics, as soon as you voice a view to someone, that person will wonder what color your state is—or what color state you're in. Are you Red or Blue? In religion, you're a heretic or a believer. In biology, if you question any aspect of Darwinian theory, do you believe in evolution? If you're a committed Darwinian, then don't you even believe in God? Can you be trusted?

The reasons people gravitate to the solidarity of group affiliation are well known to anthropology. But is the heating-up of current divisions just a tempest in a teapot? Does the continued contentiousness reflect inadequacies of science or merely of scientists? Will there be visitations on society if either side prevails? In this Citrus Bowl, Orange and Grapefruit defend points of view by interpreting the data differently. Is one more right than the other? Or is just your view right? Or is it mine?

Source: Kenneth M. Weiss 2008 The good, the bad, and the ugly. *Evolutionary Anthropology* 17 (3):129-134.

Maxine Singer on the Thread Holding Us Together

[T]he best part of [being the head of a research institute] is that I thought about areas of science I haven't thought about since I was in college. I haven't thought about physics, I haven't thought about real chemistry

since I was a graduate student. I certainly never thought about astronomy. Now, suddenly, I'm really connected to people who are doing front line work in earth sciences, geochemistry, geophysics, extragalactic astronomy. We own two observatories and I have to worry about the care and tending of telescopes and the construction of telescopes. So I've learned something about optics, I've learned something about the solar system in a real way which I'd never even thought about before.

And I've learned, really, that all of this is a big continuum of science, really held together by the notion of evolution, that everything is always changing in the universe, in the solar system, on earth, and so a lot of the ideas that "cook" things have common threads to them—although the actual science, of course, is very, very different.

Source: Maxine F. Singer. 1992. From an interview at the 1992 American Association for the Advancement of Science symposium "Winding Your Way through DNA."

Eric Foner on New Recounts

[H]istory always has been and always will be regularly rewritten, in response to new questions, new information, new methodologies, and new political, social, and cultural imperatives. But that each generation can and must rewrite history does not mean that history is simply a series of myths and inventions. There are commonly accepted professional standards that enable us to distinguish good history from falsehoods like the denial of the Holocaust. Historical truth does exist, not in the scientific sense but as a reasonable approximation of the

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past. But the most difficult truth for those outside the ranks of professional historians to accept is that there often exists more than one legitimate way of recounting past events.

Source: Eric Foner. 2002. *Who Owns History? Rethinking the Past in a Changing World*. Hill and Wang, New York.

Moishe Shokeid, on Melding Anthropologist and Informant

Anthropologists and their informants are inextricably bound together in producing an ethnographic text that integrates the impact of their unique personalities, their social incongruities, and their dreams.

Moishe Shokeid. 1997. Negotiating Multiple Viewpoints: The cook, the native, the publisher, and the ethnographic text. *Current Anthropology* 38(4):631-645.

Joseph Ransdell on New Concepts of Science

[The] philosophy of science has lost contact with what is of basic importance in science by regarding science from the point of view of theory of knowledge—which is essentially a librarial and administrative conception of science—rather than regarding it as inquiry, which is the way the working scientist thinks of science. When you focus on science as an inquiry process rather than as a body of results, publication as communication is the key to it.

Source: Joseph Ransdell. 1998. September Forum archive, October 20. The September Forum was begun in September 1998 by the American Scientist, to discuss the potential for Open Source publication.

Adrian Praetzellis on Tolerance for Ambiguity

The archaeological record contains many levels of meaning. On the surface level, we can discover the dates and designs of things, of who did what and where. That much is easy and needs only techniques, not theories. But to dig below the surface (so to speak), to speculate about why people did what they did—either consciously or as unknowing participants in a never-ending historical/political/ecological process—that requires a tolerance for ambiguity. It also helps to have some humility, to recognize that today's stunning insights may tomorrow be no more than orange peels on the compost pile of intellectual history.

Source: Adrian Praetzellis. 2001. *Death by Theory*. Altamira Press, Walnut Creek, California.

James William Lett on Social Sciences

Anthropology has traditionally attempted to stake out a compromise position on this central issue by regarding itself as both the most scientific of the humanities and the most humanistic of the sciences. That compromise has always looked peculiar to those outside anthropology, but today it looks increasingly precarious to those within the discipline.

Source: James William Lett. 1997. *Science, Reason and Anthropology: The Principles of Rational Inquiry*. Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, Maryland.

Van der Leeuw and Redman on future roles

Current environmental research based in life, earth, and social sciences pays inadequate attention to the long

time span and slow-moving processes that often underlie environmental crises. Archaeologists, as purveyors of the past, are well equipped to bring this long-term perspective to bear on contemporary issues... We believe that the time is right and our colleagues are willing to see an enhanced role for archaeologists in the study of contemporary environmental issues.

Source: Sander E. Van der Leeuw, and Charles L. Redman. 2002. Placing Archaeology at the Center of Socio-Natural Studies. *American Antiquity* 67:597-606.

Jennifer Hochschild on True Science

True science, defined as real gains in knowledge and insight, consists in figuring out how to ask the right question even if it cannot be answered, understanding how people see the world from their own vantage point, and investigating large dynamics of change or stasis. Absent a broad vantage point, the ability to consider a problem from multiple perspectives, and the recognition of one's own inevitably partial and biased conceptual lenses, one cannot determine how and why the world works as it does. True science also entails knowing when to abandon a given framework rather than to continue trying to refine it—but one cannot imagine alternative paradigms without breadth of vision.

Source: Jennifer Hochschild. 2004. On the social science wars. *Daedalus* 133(1):91-94.

Aldous Huxley on Science's Morphine

Science and art are only too often a superior kind of dope, possessing this advantage over booze and morphia: that

they can be indulged in with a good conscience and with the conviction that, in the process of indulging, one is leading the 'higher life'.

Source: Aldous Huxley, 1937. *Ends and Means*. Chatto and Windus, London.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



K. Kris Hirst was a working archaeologist in the American midwest, American southwest, and in Mexico before retiring in 2005 to write freelance science articles in archaeology. She is the person behind the website archaeology.about.com and has presented professional papers on the use of the Internet as a tool for presenting archaeological information to the public. She has an MA in Anthropology from the University of Iowa and is a member of the Society for American Archaeology, the Archaeological Institute of America, the Register of Professional Archaeologists, and the National Association of Science Writers.